care costs to skyrocket. This is simply not right.

Yet despite these terrible stories that keep pouring into our offices, the people who supported this law when it passed continue to defend it now. We kept warning them that ObamaCare would hurt jobs and increase costs. They had to know ObamaCare was going to reduce choices for women and limit their access to certain doctors and hospitals. But Washington Democrats voted for ObamaCare anyway. They created these problems. That is why they should be working with Republicans now to start over with real, patient-centered reform that lowers costs and that women and men in this country actually want, but of course they refuse. They are just doubling down on ObamaCare.

Now they are trying to convince people of another untruth—that somehow it is not possible to preserve our Nation's long tradition of tolerance and respect for people of faith while at the same time preserving a woman's ability to make her own decisions about contraception. Washington Democrats are doing this based on a claim that, in the words of the Washington Post's nonpartisan Fact Checker, is ''simply wrong''

I realize Democrats may think the best way to keep people from focusing on the impact of ObamaCare on middle-class families is to just make things up and to attempt to divide us. Well, I think that is a shame. It takes a pretty dim view of what we are capable of as a country. The goal here should not be to protect the freedoms of some while denying the freedoms of others; the goal here and always should be to preserve everybody's freedoms. We can do both. That is just what a number of us on this side are proposing to do this week. Instead of restricting Americans' religious freedoms, we should preserve a woman's ability to make contraceptive decisions for herself. That is why we plan to introduce legislation this week that says no employer can block any employee from legal access to her FDA-approved contraceptives. There is no disagreement on that fundamental point. The American people know that. They know Democrats are just attempting to offer another false choice. What we are saying is that of course you can support both religious freedom and access to contraception.

Look, if Washington Democrats really wanted to help women, they would work with us to do so. We have been imploring them to work with us to deliver relief to middle-class women for years now, to work with us on a new approach to the health care law that is hurting millions of American women. It is not too late. Work with us to increase jobs, wages, and opportunity at a time when American women are experiencing so much hardship as a result of this administration's policies—especially ObamaCare.

BAY NOMINATION

I would like to voice my opposition to the nomination of Norman Bay to be a Commissioner of and eventually lead the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, or FERC. I fail to see what qualifies Mr. Bay to be Chairman of the Commission, especially when the Acting Chair of FERC, whom he would displace, is much more qualified to hold the position. Unlike most FERC Commissioners in the last decade, he has never served as a State utility regulator, he has never served on the Commission and does not possess the background in policy areas that FERC is charged with overseeing.

In contrast to Mr. Bay, the current Acting Chair of FERC, Cheryl LaFleur, is much more qualified to hold the Chair position. Ms. LaFleur came to FERC with more than two decades of experience in the electric and natural gas industries, including roles as chief operating officer, general counsel, and acting CEO of National Grid USA and its predecessor. I find it shameful that this administration would seek to displace a well-qualified woman in favor of a male nominee with less experience.

More importantly and of utmost concern to my home State, there are factors that lead us to believe Mr. Bay would reliably serve as a rubberstamp for this administration's extreme anticoal agenda. This agenda harms the people of Kentucky and is one I most strenuously oppose.

As the current head of FERC's enforcement office, he has shown a history of targeting carbon-intensive businesses. Who is to say that if installed as the next head of FERC, he will not come after Kentucky businesses relying on the coal industry for electricity, which is 90 percent of my State.

Moreover, during his testimony before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee this past May, Bay cited his home State of New Mexico as an example of a real-life ''all of the above'' approach to energy. He mentioned his State's reliance on solar, wind, oil, and gas for its energy mix. Notably left out of this supposed ''all of the above'' approach, however, was any mention of coal—which, by the way, provides 70 percent of the electricity in New Mexico.

For all of these reasons—because he is not qualified, because he holds an anticoal agenda, and because he will be only too willing to implement this administration's anticoal policy—I will be opposing Norman Bay's nomination to FERC. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12 noon, with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the majority controlling the first half.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

NOT MY BOSS'S BUSINESS ACT

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the repercussions of the Supreme Court's misguided Hobby Lobby decision which allows employers to refuse to cover contraception as a part of their employees' health plans under the false pretense that corporations can not only have religious beliefs but they can impose those beliefs on their employees.

Several days ago I was home in the great State of Colorado. I stood shoulder to shoulder with experts in women's health care who joined me to highlight how the Hobby Lobby decision is already negatively affecting women in our State.

One Denver-based OB–GYN explained how physicians might now have to consider an employer's religious beliefs when making medical recommendations. She said the Court's decision fundamentally interferes with health care decisions that should be based solely on a patient's well-being.

Because of the Supreme Court's 5-to-4 decision, women across America are now facing the uncertainty that their bosses may restrict the health care benefits Federal law currently secures for them.

Birth control has been deemed an essential preventive health service by a nonpartisan independent group of doctors and other medical experts. Ninety-nine percent of American women have used birth control at some point in their lives. They use it for a variety of health reasons. In fact, just hours after Senator MURRAY and I introduced legislation in response to the Hobby Lobby decision, a Colorado mother called my office to share the story of how her college-age daughter was suffering from a health condition that was so debilitating that it kept her from attending class or really participating in any activities at school. As a result, her doctor prescribed a form of birth control that ended up managing her symptoms and getting her back on track. This Colorado mother wanted to make sure I knew that access to contraception is not just about birth control and that if her employer took away the contraception coverage in her family's health plan, her daughter would not have coverage for a medically necessary treatment.

Regardless of why women take birth control, none of those reasons have any connection to how they do their jobs. Their bosses have no business interfering in those decisions. But with the Court's ruling in Hobby Lobby, corporations and CEOs have been handed

the right to play the role of gatekeeper for what kind of health care employees and their families can access as a part of their health insurance plan. That is not acceptable to Coloradans.

I have heard the arguments from those who say the Supreme Court's decision narrowly protects religious freedom. I think we can all agree that where religious freedoms are being threatened, we as Americans have a duty to act swiftly to address it. But the fact is that actual religious institutions are already exempt from requirements that run contrary to their beliefs. Remember, the men and women who went to work for Hobby Lobby signed up to work at a craft store, not a religious organization.

This decision, in the words of Justice Ginsburg, is one of startling breadth. In the Hobby Lobby majority opinion, the Supreme Court said its decision only applied to ''closely held'' corporations, but up to 90 percent of American companies are considered closely held and over half of Americans work for a closely held company. To call this decision ''narrow'' is as wrong as the reasoning behind it.

Contrary to what supporters of the decision are saying, this is just not about contraceptives. We have been warned by legal experts, including Justice Ginsburg and the other three Justices who joined in her dissent, that this decision could lead to employers discriminating against women, minority groups, and others because a company's owner may object to any number of medications or procedures, such as vaccines or HIV treatment.

Just over 2 short weeks ago, before the Hobby Lobby decision, workers knew exactly what health services they had access to under their health plans. They did not need to be labor lawyers to figure out which benefits they would receive, which benefits they might be at risk of losing, or how much more they would have to pay out of pocket for prescription drugs or other critical health treatments. However, with the Hobby Lobby case, that has all changed.

Supporters of the Hobby Lobby decision want women to believe this is not a big deal. But let me be clear. This has the potential to change health coverage for millions of women. I am not—along with millions of Americans—going to stand for this kind of discrimination. I trust women to make their own health care decisions. I do not believe their employers should have a say in that. Through their hard work and insurance premiums, women have earned and already paid for coverage that includes copay-free contraception under Federal law. Health insurance is a part of their compensation packages. There is nothing free about it; they have earned it.

Not only does this case wedge bosses into private health care decisions, it unfairly burdens hard-working women, ignoring the fact that contraception can be crucial to women and families' economic success. The ability to decide when, how, and with whom to have a family is critical to the health and economic security of women and their families.

The Supreme Court even stated this in its opinion in Planned Parenthood v. Casey in 1992. I wish to quote the Supreme Court from 1992:

> The ability of women to participate equally in the economic and social life of the Nation has been facilitated by their ability to control their reproductive lives.

That is what the Court said in 1992.

Today many employees are left wondering if that economic freedom is in jeopardy. Women are left to ask their bosses whether they will continue to cover their birth control—a topic of conversation which women should never be forced to bring up at work, an issue which is certainly not a boss's business.

Throughout my time in Congress I have long believed we all have the fundamental right to live our lives as we choose, free from needless intrusion, whether by the government, by bureaucrats, or by corporations and CEOs, and certainly free from intrusion by politicians. Indeed, a women should be free to make her own health decisions based on what is right for her and her family, not according to her employer's religious beliefs.

So the reason I am standing here today is to make very clear that this type of intrusion will not stand. I am proud to lead the effort with Senator MURRAY to ensure that employers cannot refuse to cover health services guaranteed to women under Federal law.

Our bill, the Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act, would restore a woman's power to make personal health care decisions based on what is best for her and her family, free from corporate interference. I invite my colleagues of both parties to join this effort, and I thank my colleagues who will stand with Senator MURRAY and me this week to say: Women's health care is not your boss's business.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor to join with the senior Senator from Colorado, and I thank him for his excellent statement and leadership on this issue as we kick off this important debate on our bill, the Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act, or, as we just heard, the ''Not My Boss's Business Act.''

I start off by asking our colleagues a few basic questions: First of all, who should be in charge of a woman's health care decisions? Should it be the woman making those decisions with her partner, her doctor, and her faith or should it be her boss making those decisions for her based on his own religious beliefs?

To me and to the vast majority of the people across the country, the answer to that question is obvious: Women should call the shots when it comes to their health care decisions—not their boss, not the government, not anyone else, period. But we are here because five men on the Supreme Court disagreed.

Five men on the Supreme Court decided there should be a group of women across America who are required to ask their boss for permission to access basic health care. Five men on the Supreme Court decided a corporation should have more rights than the women it employs. Five men on the Supreme Court rolled back the clock on women across America, and we are here today because we cannot allow that to stand. People across the country think the Supreme Court was dead wrong on this decision, and we are here to be their voice.

When we passed health care reform, we made sure every woman has access to basic health care, including contraception, which is used or will be used by 99 percent of the women in this country. When 58 percent of women use birth control for purposes other than pregnancy prevention—including managing endometriosis, ovarian cysts, and other medical conditions—we know this provision could have a sweeping impact on women across our country. In fact, according to the Department of Health and Human Services, 30 million women nationally are already eligible for this benefit, and when the law is fully implemented, 47 million women nationally will have access to no-pay birth control, thanks to the Affordable Care Act. By the way, thanks to this benefit, women have already saved $483 million, and that is just in the last year alone.

Contraception was included as a required preventive service in the Affordable Care Act on the recommendation of the independent nonprofit Institute of Medicine and other medical experts because it is essential to the health of women and families. After many years of research, we know ensuring access to effective birth control has a direct impact on improving the lives of women and their families in America. It is directly linked to declines in maternal and infant mortality, to reduced risk of ovarian cancer, to better health outcomes for women and, by the way, far fewer unintended pregnancies and abortions, which is a goal we all should share.

We should all know improving access to birth control is a good health care policy and it is good economic policy. We know it will mean healthier women, healthier children, and healthier families, and we know it will save money for businesses and consumers. But with their ruling, setting a potential dangerous precedent, the Supreme Court has not only inserted a woman's boss into her health care decisions, in many cases they have given him the final word.

In the aftermath of this decision, women across America are turning to

Congress and demanding we fix this. And by the way it is not just women who want Congress to act. People across the country understand, if bosses can deny birth control, then they can deny vaccines or HIV treatment or other basic health care services for employees and for their dependents. I think what men across America understand is it is not just the female employees who are impacted, it is their wives and their daughters who are on their health care plan as well.

As the ink was still drying on Justice Alito's misguided opinion in this case, I made an unwavering commitment to do everything I could to protect women's access to health care since the five male Justices of the Supreme Court decided they would not. That is why I have been working with my partner, the senior Senator from Colorado, to introduce this bill, and I am proud that in the many days since then we have received such strong support from people across the country.

Our straightforward and simple legislation will ensure that no CEO or corporation can come between people and their guaranteed access to health care, period.

This shouldn't be a controversial issue. The only controversy about birth control is the fact that it is 2014 and women across America are still fighting for this basic health care.

The data is clear. Ensuring access to contraceptive coverage isn't just the right thing to do, it is a critical part of making sure women and their families have a fair shot. In the 21st century, women and their families shouldn't be held back by outdated policies and unfair practices.

Again, it is not just about access to contraception. This includes pay equity, access to childcare, higher minimum wage, and it absolutely includes the right to make their own medical and religious decisions without being dictated to or limited by their employer.

The bottom line is this: Women use birth control for a host of reasons, none of which should require a permission slip from their boss.

I thank Leader REID for moving this bill to the floor so quickly and for his commitment to getting this done because women across the country are expecting action. They do not want to wait. As we move forward on this bill this week, I hope enough Republicans can put proven science over their partisan politics and join us and revoke this Court-issued license to discriminate and return the right of Americans to make their own decisions about their own health care and their own bodies.

I thank Senator UDALL once again for his work with me on this commonsense and bicameral legislation. I also thank the Members of the House Pro-Choice Caucus who introduced their companion legislation in the House, and I sincerely hope our Republican colleagues on both sides of the Capitol will join us. For those who don't, for those Republicans who have already said they oppose our legislation, I am interested in hearing their answer to the question I posed a few minutes ago: Do they think bosses should be in charge of a woman's health care decision? Do they think women should have to ask their boss permission for health care used by 99 percent of the women? Do they think we as a country should start down the path where CEOs and corporations can start making decisions for all kinds of health care for their employees?

Women across the country will be watching this debate, and I think they will be very interested in seeing who is on their side.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MURRAY). No objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, I rise to support the ''Not My Boss's Business Act,'' which will help to fix the recent Supreme Court Hobby Lobby decision by making it illegal for a company to deny their workers specific health care benefits, including birth control, as is required to be covered by Federal law.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this bill which is necessary to ensure that all women have access to preventive care.

I wish to say, on a personal note, I was a young child growing up in a household with a working mother. Mom worked for a big corporation and worked in human resources. My table would often be one where it was discussed that my mother was dealing with challenges of racial discrimination, challenges of sexism in the workplace. I watched how my mother, in human resources, would fight to make sure that we as a nation, as well as this particular corporation, continued to advance in fairly treating all of its employees. I was proud to watch my mother assert her independence, her freedoms, and her basic sense of equity, which resonates with the highest values of this Nation.

What is frustrating to me now is here we stand in 2014, and we seem to be fighting so many battles and advancements we won before that are still needing to be fought.

It is unthinkable to me that as we should be turning our focus toward other things such as paid family leave or raising the minimum wage, here we are again fighting about whether women should have the right to have access to birth control. This is unfortunate because contraception is essential to a woman's right to make her own personal health care decisions. Birth control is not only basic to making health care decisions, but it is one in which 99 percent of women avail themselves. Throughout their lifetime we will see 99 percent of American women avail themselves of birth control.

These women should not be forced to decide between contraception and a tank of gas or between contraception and meals for their family, contraception and paying rent.

The Hobby Lobby decision, if you think about it, is imposing the will of a corporation—one corporation's board member's religious beliefs or what-have-you can be imposed such that it would cost women who now want to exercise their freedom up to $1,000 a year. For minimum-wage or low-wage workers, the out-of-pocket cost for birth control each month is a real and substantive financial burden.

Let's be clear. Workers have insurance coverage through their labor. It is part of their earned pay. This is not a free giveaway. They earned this coverage. What they spend their health care coverage on is their business, not their boss's business.

I deeply value ideals of religious liberty. This is what this country was founded on. But religious liberty belongs to all of us; it does not belong to a corporation. Religious liberty means being free from having other people's religions foisted upon you, imposed upon you, or forced upon you.

Most employees would never dream of telling their bosses what they must decide and abide by in terms of religious freedom. And by that same principle, no boss should have the right to impose his religion on the people who work for him.

That is one of the reasons why so many faith leaders have spoken against the Hobby Lobby decision. It is now making it acceptable for a corporation to impose on the individual liberty of others their religious beliefs, also the financial freedom that goes along with that, and also the ability for a woman to make critical health care decisions. They might even be interfering with a doctor telling a patient what is best for them and their health.

The views held by companies' owners should not be able to interfere with this basic understanding of fundamental rights. The Not My Boss's Business Act protects workers' religious liberty by not allowing their bosses to impose this hardship, to impose their religion, and to impose what I believe ultimately comes down to discrimination.

Finally, the precedent set by this decision could open the door wider and wider for more court cases and more employers who want to deny more aspects of basic health coverage and services because they claim it conflicts with the boss's religious beliefs. From blood transfusions to vaccinations, we are now in a minefield in which we can have the destruction of religious freedom of employees and the health care freedom we have fought so hard to manifest.

The Hobby Lobby decision is a step backward that we must correct. It is a step against women's rights. It is a step against religious freedom. It is a step against workers who earn basic benefits to have the ability to make those benefits real in their lives.

The Not My Boss's Business Act will make it clear that bosses cannot discriminate. The Not My Boss's Business Act will make it clear that there should be equal treatment under the law for the tens of thousands of workers whose coverage now hangs in the balance.

A woman's health care decisions should be between that woman and her doctor. There is no room for a boss's religious beliefs in that equation, period.

I watched for decades, growing up, not only my mother but countless people fight to establish basic principles in the workplace. We cannot go back now. This is such a critical piece of legislation, to correct for the mistakes in this Supreme Court decision and assert those fundamental American ideals, that individuals should be able to make their own health care decisions, that bosses and corporations should not impose religious beliefs on others, and that we are a nation where every woman can create a sacrosanct and private relationship with her doctor and make ultimately the health care decisions that are best for her, not ones in any way influenced or affected by a corporation.

I thank again the Senate and the Presiding Officer for this time but, most importantly, I thank Senator MURRAY and other Senators who have led on this issue. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. I am proud to follow my colleague from New Jersey, and I am proud to say I am a cosponsor of Senator MURRAY's bill and Senator UDALL's bill, the Udall-Murray bill, that is going to make sure we protect the health of our families.

I am going to put up a beautiful photograph of the Supreme Court where above the portico these words are inscribed: ''Equal Justice Under Law.'' We have reprinted them here. I am going to keep this for the remainder of my remarks, because I think that is the essential issue before us. Those four words are the promise of our country that every American should be treated equally, should be respected, should be honored.

I wish to note that these words don't say: Equal justice under law except for women. They don't say: Equal justice under law except for birth control. And they don't say: Equal justice under law as long as it is OK with your boss.

The beauty of this Nation is we respect each other's rights and freedoms, and we have shed blood to make sure those freedoms are protected.

Yet with this Hobby Lobby ruling, five men, who happen to be appointed by Republicans, decided that a corporation has the power to deny me or to deny you coverage of critical health care for us and for our families.

What is very upsetting to me is that they have seized on the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 to justify giving for-profit companies the sweeping power to deny their employees access to affordable birth control, and we believe it will prove to be other health care benefits required under Federal law.

I speak as someone who voted for the Kennedy bill, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, that if anybody thinks Ted Kennedy wanted to deny access for birth control, then they didn't know Ted Kennedy and they didn't read at all the RECORD as we debated that bill.

I voted for the Religious Freedom Restoration Act because it was written to protect an individual's freedom of religion so that if I, as a religious individual working for a corporation, don't want to use the birth control coverage, I don't have to. But if I want to, I make that choice. If I, as an independent individual, want to vaccinate my child, it is covered under law, under the insurance. I can if I want to. No one can force me to do that.

The idea behind the Religious Freedom Restoration Act was to protect the individual, and I quote: ''Government shall not substantially burden a person's exercise of religion.''

Let me repeat: ''a person's exercise of religion.'' It doesn't say a corporation's exercise of religion, your boss's exercise of his religion. It was about protecting the individual.

What the conservative majority of the Court did 2 weeks ago turned the Religious Freedom Restoration Act on its head. As someone who supported that act, it made me angry, sad—put in the adjective. It is wrong to reinterpret what a law meant. It stood the Religious Freedom Restoration Act on its head when they ruled a corporation can put its own ideology ahead of the religious freedom and health care needs of its employees.

A female employee should be able to decide whether to use birth control. And that is not all that is at stake after the Hobby Lobby decision, because we know if you follow their logic that if a corporation can deny birth control because of a religious objection, what if they object to a blood transfusion? There are certain religions that do. Then the employee can't get a blood transfusion. And what if they object to a vaccine or HIV treatment? Then, in order for employees to have access to those treatments, they wouldn't have the insurance. We all know, from looking at the real world, if you don't have insurance, these treatments become very expensive and you may not be able to avail yourselves of them.

Chief Justice John Roberts, during oral arguments in the Hobby Lobby case, made it clear that Congress can fix this and override the Court's decision, and I agree. That is why I am so thankful to Senator MURRAY and Senator UDALL for working so hard and so fast so we can have the remedy right now. It is important that we act fast. People are very confused out there as to what they can count on in their insurance coverage.

We are going to have a vote on this tomorrow. It is a cloture vote to end debate so we can actually get to a vote on the substance. Sadly, it means we need 60 votes, a supermajority. But I hope and frankly pray that we get those 60 votes because we need to protect women's health.

The Murray-Udall bill is called the Protect Women's Health from Corporate Interference Act, but they have nicknamed it Not My Boss's Business Act, which I like. It is not my boss's business what I decide to do.

It would require employers to follow the Federal law when offering health insurance to their employees, notwithstanding the Religious Freedom Restoration Act which, as I said, I believe the Court stood on its head. It was meant to protect individuals, not corporations, not your boss.

The bill says corporations cannot hide behind the Religious Freedom Restoration Act to deny their workers coverage to the benefits we have in law. More than 180 House and Senate lawmakers have cosponsored this bill so far, and I hope our colleagues will vote for it.

I was saying we need to act fast because there is confusion out there. Virtually so many women rely on birth control at some point in their lives, it is amazing. Sixty percent of women who take birth control, 6.5 million American women, do so in whole or in part to treat painful and difficult medical conditions.

Let me say that again. One may take a birth control pill for birth control, but there are many other uses for that pill; 1.5 million women out of the 6.5 million who use it, at least in part for other conditions, use it solely as a medication to treat those painful and difficult conditions.

By allowing employers to deny coverage for contraception, the Court is depriving many women and families of health care. Surveys have shown that 55 percent of young women, aged 18 to 34, struggle to afford birth control, which can cost as much as $600 per year. Maybe the Supreme Court Justices in their ivory tower think that is not a lot of money, but let me state, for women working the minimum wage, even for women earning more than the minimum wage, it is quite a hit to their pocketbooks.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg pointed out in her dissent that a woman earning the minimum wage would spend nearly an entire month's wage to get an IUD, $1,000. Imagine. This case has unjustly singled out women's health services.

I have to make a note here. I do not know of any employer that is dropping coverage for Viagra. I don't. I have

asked around. I have been on TV, I have invited folks to let me know. Oh, no, Viagra is fine; birth control is not fine. Just put the pieces together yourself. I think this decision discriminates against women, and in the slippery slope argument you are going to see it affect everyone. And we need to listen to the women who rely on birth control to improve their health and the health of their families. Let me tell you a few stories. Raquel from Sacramento was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in 2010. After her treatment her doctors told her she needed to use birth control to ensure she did not become pregnant for the next 3 years because she was really sick. Luckily, her employer covers birth control and now, happily, 4 years later she is pregnant with her first child. What could have happened to her if she had gone through an unintended pregnancy? It could have been pretty devastating. What if she had worked for a different employer who refused to offer her that birth control? Her health and the health of her child would have been at risk and that would have been tragic. So let's listen to her.

Let's listen to Katherine from Pleasant Hill, CA, who relies on birth control after having her first child.

> Both my husband and I want to be the best possible parents for our son, and having another child so soon would hurt our ability to do that. A variety of affordable birth control options are crucial for me and for all first-time moms like me!

Many years ago I was on the board of Planned Parenthood, and what we said all the time was that our dream was that every child be a wanted child—a wanted child. As a parent myself and as a grandparent I tell you right now it takes a lot to raise a child. Hillary Clinton said it takes a village. It certainly takes loving parents, and it takes a loving family. It certainly costs money, and it certainly takes energy.

We want our families to be healthy. We want our families to be productive, and birth control is a success story. It breaks my heart that women just like Katherine who work at Hobby Lobby and other for-profit corporations now could be denied access to affordable health care unless we fix this.

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act was not about giving your boss the power over you like this. It was about giving you the right to make your own choices and decisions. We need to listen to women like Ariana in Redding, CA, who wrote:

> I am a recent college graduate trying to make ends meet and pay off my student loans. It is a great relief to know I can get the birth control I need without a copay.

These are real stories. If the boss doesn't like that you choose birth control, that is his right. If he wants to sit down with his daughter and tell her his religious objection, and if she agrees with him, that is fine. I mean, that is what America is about. But don't take your religious beliefs, your ideology, your biases, your prejudices, and your opinions and foist them on your employees. That is not this country. That is not what we are about.

Shouldn't we care more about the rights of women and their families than the rights of a few employers who can exercise that in their families? This bill we are going to vote on is critical, and I hope it won't die as a result of partisanship. We have to rise above partisanship around here.

''Equal justice under law''—that is what it says over the portico. And frankly, there is another issue. If you look at what has happened to the rates of abortion since we have seen more use of birth control, they are going down. There has been a study in one of our Nation's big cities that proved that because there was broad use of birth control, abortions went down by 50 percent. Imagine. So if that is our concern regardless of whether we are pro-choice or not, we shouldn't be embracing decisions that make it more difficult for women to get access to birth control.

So equal justice under the law doesn't say: ''except for women.'' It doesn't say: ''except if my boss disagrees with me.'' It is pretty beautiful. It is pretty clear. It is something that we have to respect. It is for the ages, and tomorrow we are going to see if our colleagues agree. Every Senator must take a stand tomorrow for individual liberty. When we vote tomorrow, let's be reminded: Women are watching. The American people will hold each of us accountable if we fail to protect their rights and their ability to decide what is best for their families.

I have been around a while. I was around when one of the Bushes was actually on the board of Planned Parenthood—George Herbert Walker Bush. Suddenly this issue is back—birth control—and suddenly we are arguing over it again.

So I say this. I may be wearing a white jacket, but it is not a white doctor's coat. I am not a doctor, and I don't want to put myself, as a politician, in between a woman and her doctor or in between a family and their doctor. Let's leave important health care choices where they belong: with women, with families, with doctors, and not with politicians, in the Senate or Justices sitting in a courtroom.

Thank you very much. I yield the floor.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). The Senator from North Carolina.

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that if cloture is invoked on either the Bay or LaFleur nomination the confirmation vote or votes occur at 3:15 p.m. with all other provisions of the previous order remaining in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the request?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROTECT WOMEN'S HEALTH

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act, to stand up for what I thought was a commonly shared value—that a woman's health care decisions are between her and her doctor, not her and her boss. I thought that was well-established, straightforward—simple, even.

But it turns out that the majority of the Supreme Court thought differently when it came to certain kinds of health care decisions: whether a woman would have access to contraceptives without copays as guaranteed by Federal law. As we all know now, 2 weeks ago the Supreme Court held in Hobby Lobby that an employer's personal beliefs can trump some of the most private and significant health care decisions a woman makes.

So let me be very clear on where I stand: What kind of birth control a female employee uses is not her boss's business.

I have heard some of the supporters of the Supreme Court decision argue that ruling is a narrow ruling, and that it only applies to closely held family businesses. That doesn't tell the whole story because just 3 days after this ruling in Hobby Lobby the Court said that a nonprofit religious college didn't have to comply with a contraceptive coverage requirement even though it had already had an accommodation that allowed it to avoid paying for such coverage itself.

The majority even pointed to this accommodation in the Hobby Lobby ruling as an example of a less restrictive alternative that could be open to for-profit businesses. A few days later that same accommodation wasn't good enough.

In her dissent Justice Sotomayor wrote:

> Those who are bound by our decisions usually believe that they can take us at our word. Not so today.

In other words, in less than a week the Supreme Court's conservative majority went from issuing a supposedly narrow ruling to potentially broadening it to encompass a new class of institutions. The impact of the ruling in Hobby Lobby will most definitely not be limited to those closely held businesses, as some say. I have heard others argue, in essence: Don't worry. The ruling doesn't expressly ban access to contraceptives. It just shifts the additional cost of the coverage back to the women.

But those who say erecting a barrier of cost between a woman and birth control will give her the same access she had before the decision don't understand what women have to go through to get covered and don't understand the many reasons why women use birth control. Since the coverage requirement went into effect last year, the number of women who got their birth