

control without a copay jumped from 14 percent to 56 percent. That means some serious costs were avoided for many women.

The average annual savings for women last year was \$269. In total, women in the United States saved \$483 million on contraceptives, thanks to the Affordable Care Act. Among those women were 917,000 in North Carolina alone who were eligible for preventive services without additional copays. Many of these women sought and used birth control medications for reasons that had absolutely nothing to do with planning pregnancy. In fact, oral contraceptives are a key treatment for at least three major medical conditions that affect women. Polycystic ovary syndrome affects 5 to 10 percent of women of reproductive age, and if left untreated can lead to the development of ovarian cysts or infertility. In addition, 11 percent of women are affected by endometriosis in their lifetime, and 40,000 women each year are diagnosed with endometrial cancer. Many women are at risk of developing ovarian cancer—one of the most deadly cancers in the United States—and women with ovarian cancer also can receive treatment via birth control. And yes, one of the best known ways to reduce the risk of these conditions is birth control.

Employers who make their female employees pay out of pocket for contraceptives aren't just imposing their personal beliefs, they are also making it more difficult for women to access important lifesaving medical treatment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, I would like to ask for another 45 seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Hearing no objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. HAGAN. That is why I believe it is so important to debate and to pass the Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act. This bill would fix the Hobby Lobby decision by making it illegal for any company to deny their workers specific health benefits, including birth control, that would be required to be covered. It would make clear that bosses cannot discriminate against their female workers and would ensure equal treatment under the law for tens of thousands of workers for which coverage hangs in the balance. It would preserve and codify the existing accommodation for our nonprofit religious employees.

It is troubling to me that in 2014 we are even debating women's access to contraception. Nearly all women—99 percent—will use it at some point in their lives, and they should have access to safe, effective birth control if they choose to use it—plain and simple.

This bill would ensure that those decisions about an employee's health can stay between the woman and her doctor, not between the woman and her boss. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Thank you, Mr. President, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

CONGO ADOPTION POLICY

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I want to talk about an issue today that transcends party lines: the humanitarian crisis we are seeing in Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In September of last year the Congo informed the United States that they would no longer issue exit visas for Congolese children who were in the process of being adopted by American parents. These are kids that have gone through the adoption process and yet the Government of the Congo says they cannot leave the country. This terrible and unjustifiable action has left hundreds of children and their families here in the United States in limbo.

Last Friday the Congolese Government announced an end to exit permit exceptions until the country passes what they deem are new adoption laws. I stand here today to express our deep concern and commitment to resolve this crisis from so many in the Senate. We have over 50 cosponsors for a resolution calling on the Congo to do the right thing. Those of us who have cosponsored this are looking for a way to help these children who have already been adopted to be reunited with their families permanently.

More than 350 families have finalized adoptions of Congolese children. They have obtained the necessary U.S. approvals, including U.S. visas authorizing their children to immigrate to the United States. There were 400 additional families in the process of completing adoptions at the time Congo imposed this moratorium. In every way that matters, including in what they feel in their hearts, these are their children.

All told, more than 800 children are caught in this diplomatic nightmare. By the way, that is about 10 percent of total adoptions worldwide by American families last year. These are international adoptions, so it is a significant number. Many of these kids have special needs, and those needs are not being met. Until they are able to come home and be with their families, those needs will not be met. In fact, some lives have been put at risk. In fact, six of these children have already died.

I had the opportunity to meet with some of the parents of some of these children and have seen some of the photos and heard some of the stories. If the Congolese Government would simply do the right thing and allow these exit permits, lives would be saved. We can't remain silent in the face of this tragedy.

Together with Senator LANDRIEU of Louisiana, I am offering a resolution calling on the administration to take action and demand that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo resume processing these adoption cases and issuing exit permits so these kids can leave. They need to

prioritize the processing of inter-country adoptions which were initiated before the suspension began.

I thank Senator LANDRIEU for her hard work on this matter, as well as 50 of our colleagues from both sides of the aisle who have joined us.

Last week I met with a number of families from Ohio, and we had the opportunity to talk about some of these kids and some of their specific circumstances. We also talked about what these families are ready to do, and they are ready to give these kids the support and love they need.

I met with the Millimans from Columbus, OH. They are adopting a little girl who has very serious medical conditions. They are in the final stages of the adoption process, and they fear they will not be able to provide her the treatment and care she needs.

I also met with the Webb family. The Webbs are in the process of adopting a child from the Congo to bring to their home in Wooster, OH. The Webbs' biological daughter Heather is also in the process of adopting from the Congo. They were both in the Capitol to talk about their kids and what they have been through.

These families represent the very best of our country and our values, a respect for these young people's lives and a commitment to live with humility, prioritizing the needs of the most vulnerable children. This diplomatic impasse is keeping these families apart. It is time the administration joined with Congress to support the families and the children involved in this crisis in every way possible.

In the coming days, I hope we will speak with one voice and demand that Congo reverse their decision and process these adoptions as quickly as possible. It is my sense this is an issue that will come up in committee this week. I hope before this session is out we will be able to take this up on the floor of the Senate, pass it, and begin to put some pressure on the Congolese Government to do the right thing. It is time to allow these children to be with their loving families.

With that, I yield back all time and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, last week I heard the majority leader speak about people who are happy with the President's health care law. While I agree that some people have been helped by the law, many Americans have been hurt by the law's destructive side effects. Republicans have given examples of people from all across the

country of all ages and in all kinds of situations being harmed by the health care law, and we found that a disproportionate number of those being hurt are women. These are middle-class Americans who work hard, do the right thing, and they just want to care for themselves and their families.

The health care law that the President wrote—and every Senate Democrat in the Senate voted for—is standing between them and the lives they want to live. That is what I am hearing from my neighbors back home in Wyoming, and I think I hear from more individuals than many of the Senators do because I was a physician and practiced medicine in Wyoming for 25 years. I have taken care of patients and families.

I would like to share with everyone what I have been hearing from the women around the State of Wyoming and how this law has been impacting their lives.

I got a letter from a woman in Gillette, WY, and she said: “I wanted to share with you my frustration and worry concerning the Affordable Care Act.”

She said she and her husband have three daughters—ages 12, 9, and 3—and her husband started a new business. She said: “Thanks to the new health care law our insurance premium increased \$560 per month.” That is \$6,700 more a year that this family has to pay for insurance under the President’s health care law.

She wrote:

As we struggle to plan for our girls’ futures, attempt to make my husband’s business prosper, and dream of what our future may hold once our children are raised, it is disheartening that we will now pay nearly \$17,000 a year for health insurance.

She said:

There are so many things we could, and should, be able to do with that money. That additional \$560 per month could be put in our girls’ college funds, be given back to our church and community. Sadly, we don’t have the luxury of deciding how to use that hard-earned money.

We have been told by Washington that we will spend our money on health insurance. I have never felt so completely let down by the American government.

Here is a woman who just wants to raise her family, send her daughters to college, maybe grow the family business, and there she is in Wyoming struggling with the burden Washington Democrats imposed on her with this terrible health care law and its damaging and disheartening side effects.

President Obama says the Democrats who voted for this law should “forcefully defend and be proud” of the health care law.

Are Democrats in the Senate who voted for this health care law proud of what they are doing to this woman and her family? Are Democrats willing to come to the floor and forcefully defend and be proud that this Wyoming family has to spend thousands of dollars on health insurance instead of on their daughters’ college funds?

Millions of women all across America are in the same situation as this woman in Gillette, WY. There has been a new study that looked at how much more money people are paying this year for insurance in the ObamaCare exchanges than they paid last year before the Obama health care law kicked in. They found that a lot of women are paying much more because of the President’s health care law.

In North Carolina—and we just heard from the Senator from North Carolina—an average 27-year-old woman is paying \$1,100 more for health insurance coverage than she did last year. In North Carolina a 64-year-old woman is paying \$5,000 more because of all of the requirements of the health care law. Is that Senator willing to come back and forcefully defend and be proud of this health care law and what it has done to these women in her home State?

It is the same in Arkansas. An average 40-year-old woman pays \$1,300 more this year because of the law. A 64-year-old woman in Arkansas is paying \$3,400 more this year in the exchanges. In one State after another, women are paying more. Women of all ages are getting hurt. The Washington Post had a very interesting story about this on June 24.

It said: “Older women bear the brunt of higher health insurance costs under Obamacare.” That is the headline from the Washington Post—“Older women bear the brunt of higher insurance costs under Obamacare.”

The article says a new report found “women age 55 to 64 will face a huge spike in cost when they go out to buy individual insurance on the federal exchange.”

The article says, “These women bear the brunt of the increased premiums and out of pocket expenses after the Affordable Care Act.”

Under President Obama and the Democrats’ plan, older women are bearing the brunt of higher health insurance costs. This is a disgraceful side effect of the Democrats’ health care law. Women across the country are paying more money for insurance they do not need, do not want, and will likely never use.

Are Democrats willing to come to the floor of the Senate and forcefully defend and be proud of the fact that older women are bearing the brunt of higher health insurance costs under this law?

I got another letter from a rancher from Newcastle, WY. She and her husband were paying \$650 a month for insurance. She said, “We don’t carry maternity insurance because we have completed our family.” This woman has had a hysterectomy.

I get letters more than maybe most because I am a physician who practiced in Wyoming for a long time.

She says their insurance agent told them they couldn’t renew their policy at the end of last year. The reason? Because it didn’t meet the President’s requirement that they have to have maternity coverage, so they had to choose a new policy from the exchange.

Now, remember, she doesn’t need or want maternity coverage and she is never going to use it because she has had a hysterectomy. According to President Obama and the Democrats, it doesn’t matter one bit. It doesn’t matter.

They were paying \$650 a month before ObamaCare. She said her insurance agent quoted her rates for a comparable policy of anywhere between \$1,300 and \$1,600 a month or they could take a bronze policy with much less coverage than they had before for \$900—still more than they were paying before. So \$3,000 a year more than they paid before ObamaCare, and the out-of-pocket costs would be much higher and much more difficult for the family.

This woman from Wyoming writes:

We’re being forced out of a good policy, which we pay for with hard-earned money, which we choose, into a dangerous financial health care situation, with less coverage, and which puts my husband and I, who are proud of our own sustainability, on to what we consider the welfare rolls by needing a government subsidy to afford a plan that we don’t want or need.

We don’t want, we don’t need, and we are forced on to it.

She writes:

To say that we’re angry is an understatement. Why is this happening? Why can Obama force me into this? We feel helpless.

This isn’t what the President of the United States promised the American people. It is not what every Democrat who voted for the health care law promised the American people.

It seems to me that President Obama and Democrats in the Senate just don’t get it. All these women wanted was a chance to buy insurance coverage that worked for them. They wanted the right to be left alone to make their own choices about their family’s health care, not to have Washington make choices for them. They wanted the care they need from a doctor they choose at lower cost.

President Obama wasn’t interested in listening to what women wanted. He wanted to tell—he wanted to mandate—he wanted to tell them and mandate what he thought was best for them. It is outrageous.

I hear from people almost every day who are feeling the costly and cruel side effects of the health care law.

I heard from a woman in Casper, WY, where I practiced and was chief of staff of the Wyoming Medical Center in Casper. She gets her insurance through her job. The costs have gone up so much under ObamaCare that she is worried about what might happen. She writes:

I am concerned for what I might be facing when my employer has to comply with the [health care law] next year. I have not had children yet because of the effects the recession had on me and my husband. I would very much like to think we could have one in the next couple of years, however, the insurance fiasco worries me.

So this woman is worried that the health care law might actually affect her and her husband having a family.

Why did President Obama take away the rights of women to choose what

health coverage is right for them and their families? This was an active decision made by Democrats in this body and the President of the United States to take away the rights of women to choose what health coverage is right for them and their families.

Why did President Obama raise the cost of health care and make it more expensive for women?

These are just a few of the women who are being hurt by ObamaCare and just a few of the ways the President's health care law is affecting women all across America.

Again, there are some people who have been helped by the law. Some people are happy with their insurance. Nobody is denying that. There are also people who have been hurt by the law and who can't afford it and who are devastated because of it. What does the President have to say to those people? Why won't President Obama sit down with just one of these women who has written to me and actually listen to the damage he has done to them, to their families, and to their health care as a result of his health care law?

Why won't Democrats come to the floor of the Senate and talk about these millions of Americans—millions of women—whom they have harmed with the health care law?

Republicans have offered ideas for health care reform that allow women to make choices on what is best for them and their families. If they want maternity coverage, they can find a policy that offers it. They wouldn't be forced to pay for what they don't need or don't want just because someone in Washington tells them they must. People wanted health care reform to give them access to quality, affordable care—not more expensive coverage.

Republicans are going to keep coming to the floor. We are going to keep offering real solutions for better health care without all of these expensive and offensive side effects.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

BORDER CRISIS

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, as have many Americans, I have watched with increasing concern and increasing frustration the rapidly growing humanitarian crisis on our southern border. More than 60,000 unaccompanied alien children—mostly minors from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador—have been apprehended at the border in this fiscal year, and we have 2½ months remaining. The numbers are staggering. Another 40,000 family members—one or

both parents traveling with their children—have also been apprehended just in this fiscal year.

To put these numbers in perspective, in 2008, the number of unaccompanied alien children apprehended at the border was 8,000. Three years later, in 2011, the number had doubled. It had doubled to 16,000. This is a situation we perhaps didn't see coming, but should have.

Today, of course, the numbers are staggering, as I mentioned. The number has skyrocketed. In fact, in April and May of this year, 10,000 have arrived. We simply cannot sit back and let this situation grow worse as it does day by day. We must now find a way to solve this crisis and stem the flow of unaccompanied minors entering our country. It is imperative that this Congress and this administration work together to do this and do this immediately. We dare not move toward our regularly scheduled August recess without accomplishing the solution or resolution of this current crisis, which is impacting children, impacting families, impacting communities, impacting many across the United States in terms of this crisis.

As we do this, I think it is important that we be guided by some key principles, including laws that are currently on the books—laws that might need to be adjusted—as well as compassionate hearts in terms of how we deal with those who are here but will need to be returned to their homeland.

First, clearly and foremost, we have to enforce existing law. Existing law says we need an orderly process. Immigration needs to be legal. It needs to be processed in an orderly way and in a way so that we can accommodate those who come from out of the country. I am the son of an immigrant who was processed through a legal process, a process that speaks for many of us not only here in this Chamber but for many across America. We are all in a sense immigrants. For over 200 years, we have come as immigrants through a legal process. Today we find a situation where our borders are being swamped with those who are attempting to come illegally, for whatever reason. More importantly, we have to make it clear to them that the law does not allow this to happen. So we have to get control of the border. We have to get control of our immigration process.

I think all of us feel the need for immigration reform. Step No. 1 has to be securing our borders so we can convince the American people we can return to an orderly process of bringing immigrants to this country and not be overwhelmed by the illegal immigration flowing to our southern borders. It is also important because we need to let the families know and the children know their trip to America is not what has been promised them.

Many believe this humanitarian crisis is focused on how we handle these children once they arrive at the border, and there is a need to address that issue. But in reality, the crisis for

these children begins when they start their trip, given the dangers of the journey. We now know the children who are making these dangerous treks from Central America are often in the hands of smugglers, drug cartels, coyotes—criminal elements that are delivering a false lie to families and individuals in these countries. They are basically saying, Get your children across the border and they will then be absorbed into American society and they will be in a better place. And, by the way, write us a check for \$7,000 or \$10,000 or \$5,000, whatever the market bears, and we will ensure that your children arrive safely, and then you won't have to worry about them anymore. That is simply not true.

Sadly, from the latest information that has come to us, in surveys that are being taken and investigations that are being made, the story is horrendous. Often, for those in the hands of those who are seeking to bring them along the approximately 1,500-mile trip from Central America to the Texas border, the reality of what these children are facing and what these families are facing is startling and it is an issue that absolutely has to be addressed.

Doctors Without Borders exists in southern and central Mexico, and they did surveys of those who were attempting to make this trip. They indicated that 58 percent of their patients suffered at least—at least—one episode of violence along their way from Central America to the United States. One media network did an investigation that followed the path of Central American migrants, including children, and while their numbers have not been verified or documented, they are staggering. Even if the results are half of what they claim, it is a situation of immense humanitarian dysfunction. They found that 80 percent of all migrants will be assaulted, 60 percent of women will be raped, and only 40 percent will actually make it to the border.

Let's say those numbers are exaggerated. There is some indication this media outlet was, perhaps, sensationalizing their numbers. Let's say it is just half of that. But if it is half of that, it is a situation we absolutely cannot tolerate. We absolutely cannot sit by and say the only humanitarian crisis is taking care of these children once they cross the border—making sure they have vaccinations, sustenance, and a place to sleep until we get them processed. Those who claim that need to understand the crisis that exists before they ever get to the border, and the impact on these children in particular.

In 2010, when the narrative coming out of the administration was chipping away at our Nation's immigration laws through the abuse of prosecutorial discretion, this generated whispers of hope that ran rampant through the families of our Central American neighbors and gave a false confidence that if you illegally enter our country, once you are here, you will be able to