

ready to confirm a new Attorney General, but Republicans weren't and aren't.

February and March flew by and Republicans still aren't ready. Now we are half way through April, and once again, Senate Democrats are ready and willing to confirm a new Attorney General, but the Republicans are not.

Ms. Lynch has a spotless record. No one can question her integrity, her background, and there is no question that she should not have to wait any longer.

SGR LEGISLATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have spent a little bit of time talking about the sustainable growth rate—the doc fix—or the SGR. Before the Senate recessed for the Easter break, Republicans were unable to agree on how to prevent the physician pay cut. Democrats were ready to proceed. The last night we were here, we said: When we come back, we want to move this House bill forward. We want three simple amendments.

We still feel the same way. We are willing not only to move forward on those amendments, but we will give a very short time agreement on each one of them.

The Republican leader said when bills come to the floor, he wants to have amendments. We don't want to amend this bill to death. We want three simple amendments. We said that the night we were here when closing the Senate for the Easter recess, and we say it again. I wish Republicans would have joined us years ago in our efforts to repeal this faulty law, but they did not do that.

Regardless of the history, we have an urgent need before us today to get this bill done. Each day that passes without doing this SGR, this sustainable growth rate—to get rid of it is basically what we are doing. It would be a good day for America. It would also be a good day for America when we can confirm Loretta Lynch. Each day that passes without her confirmation and without a doc fix is just another example of Republicans' inability to govern.

Mr. President, would you announce the business of the day.

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, there will now be a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

DISAPPROVAL OF SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 8—PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

On March 31, 2015, during the adjournment of the Senate, a message from the President of the United States was received returning to the Senate the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 8) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to representation case procedures.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the veto message to accompany S.J. Res. 8 is considered as having been read, will be printed in the RECORD, and spread in full upon the Journal.

The veto message ordered to be printed in the RECORD is as follows:

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

S.J. Res. 8 would overturn the National Labor Relations Board's recently issued "representation case procedures" rule and block modest but overdue reforms to simplify and streamline private sector union elections. Accordingly, I am withholding my approval of this resolution. (The Pocket Veto Case, 279 U.S. 655 (1929)).

Workers need a strong voice in the workplace and the economy to protect and grow our Nation's middle class. Unions have played a vital role in giving workers that voice, allowing workers to organize together for higher wages, better working conditions, and the benefits and protections that most workers take for granted today. Workers deserve a level playing field that lets them freely choose to make their voices heard, and this requires fair and streamlined procedures for determining whether to have unions as their bargaining representative. Because this resolution seeks to undermine a streamlined democratic process that allows American workers to freely choose to make their voices heard, I cannot support it.

To leave no doubt that the resolution is being vetoed, in addition to withholding my signature, I am returning S.J. Res. 8 to the Secretary of the Senate, along with this Memorandum of Disapproval.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, March 31, 2015.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

SGR LEGISLATION

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I would like to take a few minutes to talk once again about the ongoing effort to replace the Medicare sustainable growth rate, or SGR, formula.

As we know, SGR has been a problem pretty much since its inception. Members of both parties have grown tired of passing temporary SGR patches that have been cobbled together at the last minute behind closed doors. This constant, seemingly unending, cycle has only grown more tiresome as the years have gone by.

That is why a little over 2 years ago a group of leaders from both the House and the Senate set out to fix this problem once and for all. I was part of this effort. I was joined on the Senate side by former Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus. Together, Senator Baucus and I worked with the leaders of the House Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means Committees to craft legislation that would repeal and replace SGR with an improved payment system that rewards quality, efficiency, and innovation.

While many critics deemed our efforts a lost cause, we introduced our bill in late 2013 and got it reported out of the Finance Committee on a voice vote. That same legislation formed the basis of the SGR bill that passed overwhelmingly in the House with 392 votes at the end of March.

Now the bill is before the Senate. It is my hope that we will act quickly to pass this bipartisan, bicameral legislation and send it to the President's desk as soon as possible.

This SGR bill is historic for a number of reasons. First of all, it demonstrates what Congress is truly capable of when Members work together. While that type of cooperation used to be commonplace around here, it has in recent years been in short supply. The bill also represents a step forward in the effort to reform our Nation's entitlement programs. The bill contains bipartisan reforms to the Medicare program, and it is not limited to fixing the broken SGR system.

To go along with the permanent SGR fix, the bill includes a meaningful downpayment on Medicare reform without any accompanying tax hikes. These reforms include a limitation on so-called Medigap first-dollar coverage, more robust means testing for Medicare Parts B and D, and program integrity provisions that will strengthen Medicare's ability to fight fraud.

I am aware that these are not transformative reforms and that much more work will be necessary to put Medicare—not to mention our other entitlement programs—on a more sustainable trajectory. However, any Senators who, like me, have been clamoring for entitlement reform should welcome these changes. After all, for years the idea of bipartisan Medicare reform seemed, at best, farfetched. President Obama and his allies here in Congress have stated repeatedly that, before they would consider changes to our safety net programs, Republicans would have to agree to massive tax hikes. But here we are, just one Senate vote away from enacting meaningful and bipartisan Medicare reforms into law.