If the bill expands Medicaid eligibility to 133% of the poverty level, that too will lead to rationing. Because Washington bureaucrats have created a system that underpays doctors, 40% of doctors already restrict access to Medicaid patients, and therefore ration care.

Medicaid demonstrates, tragically in some cases, that access to a government program does not guarantee access to health care. In Maryland, 17,000 Medicaid patients are currently on a waiting list for medical services, and as many as 250 may have died while awaiting care, according to state auditors. Kansas, the home state of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, faces a Medicaid backlog of more than 15,000 applicants.

Other unintended consequences of the Reid bill could wreak havoc on patients' lives. What happens, for instance, when savvy consumers commanded to buy insurance realize the penalty is the de facto premium? It won't take long for younger, healthier Americans to realize it's cheaper to pay a $750 tax for coverage instead of, say, $5,000 in annual premiums when coverage can't be denied if you get sick.

OMB Budget Director Peter Orzsag's belief that mandatory health insurance will become a ''cultural norm'' is bureaucratic naivete that will produce skyrocketing premiums and reduced care for everyone. My state's own insurance commissioner, a Democrat, recently confirmed this concern to me in a letter noting that ''the result will be higher insurance rates due to a higher percentage of insured being higher risk/expense individuals.''

But the most fundamental flaw of the Reid bill is best captured by the story of one my patients I'll call Sheila. When Sheila came to me at the age of 33 with a lump in her breast, traditional tests like a mammogram under the standard of care indicated she had a cyst and nothing more. Because I knew her medical history, I wasn't convinced. I aspirated the cyst and discovered she had a highly malignant form of breast cancer. Sheila fought a heroic battle against breast cancer and enjoyed 12 good years with her family before succumbing to the disease.

If I had been practicing under the Reid bill, the government would have likely told me I couldn't have done the test that discovered Sheila's cancer because it wasn't approved under CER. Under the Reid bill, Sheila may have lived another year instead of 12, and her daughters would have missed a decade with their mom.

The bottom line is that under the Reid bill the majority of America's patients might be fine. But some will be like Sheila—patients whose it lives hang in the balance and require the care of a doctor who understands the science and art of medicine, and can make decisions without government interference.

The American people are opposing this bill in greater numbers every day because the facts of the bill—not any tactic—are cause for serious concern.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, here you have it. We have a bill that is going to be voted on at 1 in the morning on a Monday morning. Why? Because the people who are proposing the bill are scared to let the American people know what is in it. That is why public opinion has soured on this proposal to the point that it is at the lowest level ever, with just 32 percent of Americans in favor, just less than one in three. Less than one in three Americans supports what is being proposed.

I believe each one of my amendments would have raised the level of support, would have made this better for American taxpayers, for American citizens, for American patients, for the patients who depend on our health care system, for the providers who give the care, and for the people who pay for it.

I see my colleague from North Carolina ready to rise. I am so happy to be joined on the Senate floor by these two wonderful colleagues who have a great bill of their own that has gotten very little hearing, very little opportunity, certainly no opportunity for a vote on the Senate floor.

As my Senate colleague from North Carolina gets his microphone ready to go, I will say that to be held to a false deadline of Christmas Day on something as important as a bill that is going to impact the health of every person in this country, impact one-sixth of the economy of the United States—it is much more important that we get it right than that it gets rushed through with speed and secrecy, with not being able to offer amendments when a 383-page amendment by Senator REID is dropped on the table yesterday and a vote is going to be held at 1 in the morning on a Monday morning.

It is astonishing that we do not have bipartisan support, people working together to find solutions. It is astonishing when you have a body such as this of 100 Members, 2 of whom are physicians with 50 years of experience practicing medicine, working with the system, fighting against insurance companies and fighting against the government, two physicians who know that you do not want anybody between you and your physician, you do not want a government bureaucrat, you do not want an insurance bureaucrat, you do not want anyone. But what we are looking at is the worst of all possible worlds.

I ask my colleague from North Carolina if he has some additional thoughts.

Mr. BURR. I do, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I look around this Chamber, and I see the busts of many Vice Presidents who have served as the leaders of this Chamber. It makes me wonder what would they think of the process in which we are currently engaged, individuals who, in a time of history of our country, took so seriously what went on in this Chamber and the effects it had on the American people.

I look at the process we are going through right now and see the way we have trivialized this process—votes in the middle of the night. Twenty-four hours ago, there was not a managers' amendment. There was not a score. Then yesterday morning we got a managers' amendment, 380-some pages, and we got a score. Today we get a notice from the Congressional Budget Office saying that in their score, they made a $½ trillion error, a $500 billion, $½ trillion error in the projection they sent to Congress. In 24 hours, $½ trillion.

Why doesn't this seem to bother those who are the authors of the bill? It is because it is not their money. It is the American people's money. That is the only way you could rationalize how you could be in Washington talking about spending $2.5 trillion at best to stop waste, fraud, and abuse, because, let's face it, Republicans and Democrats agree: There is no health care reform in here. There is a coverage expansion, but there is no health care reform.

Democrats have walked to the floor and said that we lie. I am not lying. Show me the health care reform. Show me where you have drastically changed, transformed health care. If you transform health care, then you wouldn't have to steal $464 billion from Medicare.

Mr. BAUCUS. Will the Senator yield so I can show him?

Mr. BURR. Regular order, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BAUCUS. He doesn't——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina has the floor.

Mr. BURR. I appreciate that, Mr. President.

We have gone through this, and we are refused the ability to offer amendments. We are refused the opportunity to sit in the back room where the legislation was constructed. It is shared with us when they are ready. But they use everybody's money. Tell me how it is fair to the American people.

When Nebraska gets a sweetheart deal under Medicaid, and Massachusetts and Vermont, in the managers' amendment, when Nebraska is told: We are going to expand Medicaid and we are going to hold you harmless in perpetuity, you will not have to pay, tell me how that is fair to the taxpayers of Virginia, tell me how it is fair to the taxpayers of Ohio, tell me how it is fair to the taxpayers of North Carolina that they are going to pay for what Nebraskans should be obligated to pay. I believe, knowing Nebraska, that the people of Nebraska would want to pay their fair share. But, no, to buy a vote, they have been given a deal.

This bill is still $2.5 trillion. It still steals $464 billion from Medicare. It still puts a tremendous unfunded mandate on every State in this country with the exception of the State of Nebraska. There are a number of States that have a grace period for some period of time, whatever it took to get their comfort level of their vote, but for every other State, at some point they are going to be obligated to pick up that difference.

We cover 31 million Americans who were not covered—that is a wonderful thing—and 15 million of them are dumped into Medicaid, the worst health care delivery system that exists in this country, a health care system that only has the opportunity today to see 60 percent of the available doctors because the other 40 percent will not see them.