

workers should be justly rewarded for their labor. President Lincoln saw Government as a catalyst that could propel the son of a farmer or a tradesman to a better life, to greater economic stability. He believed that Government investment in public works projects created jobs for millions of Americans, and history has shown him right—projects such as the transcontinental railroad, the Morrill Act to create land grants for colleges, and the building of canals through much of what was then the United States.

It was the same philosophy championed by Franklin Delano Roosevelt some 70 years later on behalf of a nation in turmoil. Once again, the economic might of our Government was harnessed to promote public works projects, to create jobs, and to create economic prosperity.

President Roosevelt's New Deal projects led to the construction of electricity-generating dams—I know what it did in the Presiding Officer's part of the country—in schools, in hospitals, in highways and bridges.

The WPA, the Works Progress Administration, was responsible for putting millions of Americans back to work to support their families, back on the path to the American dream. Our Nation once again faces chronically uncertain economic times. During the last 8 years, the wealthiest 1 percent of our Nation got wealthier and wealthier. Most of the rest of America saw their wages stagnate. Yet the 1 percent got the hugest tax breaks. Middle-class families, the backbone of our Nation, saw their income stagnate, their jobs disappear, their health care costs rise, and sometimes their health care itself evaporate, their energy costs rise, their homes go into foreclosure, their retirement security vanish.

Productivity rose and real wages declined. You would think in the history of this country, in the postwar years especially, when productivity went up, when workers were more productive, their wages kept up. During the Bush administration, that was truncated, where prosperity continued to go up, but wages flattened and the workers simply did not share in the wealth they created.

That would so violate the spirit of Abraham Lincoln and so run counter to what he said about labor and about workers. Let me read that line again: It has so happened in all ages of the world, that some have laboured and others have, without labour, enjoyed a huge proportion of the fruits. This is wrong, and should not continue.

Our Government's priorities in the last few years were focused on enabling the wealthiest Americans to accrue more wealth, not focused on ensuring that hard work would enable middle-class families to thrive. Lincoln knew better. Roosevelt knew better. And we know better. That is why what we are doing this week is so important. We are walking away from priorities that undervalue Main Street, Lima, OH,

Main Street, Akron, OH, Main Street, Mansfield, OH, and overvalue Wall Street. We are walking away from priorities that undervalue Main Street and overvalue Wall Street.

We are focusing on making sure that there are jobs to be had, and that Americans who work hard and play by the rules are rewarded for doing those jobs and renewing American prosperity by rebuilding its infrastructure, an infrastructure that has been starved by a war in Iraq, and starved by tax cuts going overwhelmingly to the wealthy. We are investing in public works projects because we know that the path carved out by President Lincoln, expanded by President Roosevelt, and now the one we follow along with President Obama, is the right path for job creation. It is the right path for our Nation's economy and our Nation's workers. It is the right path to the American dream.

Abraham Lincoln, first and foremost, believed in American workers. He believed in American businesses. He believed in America itself. This economic recovery package is an investment in our great country, it is a fitting way to mark President Lincoln's birthday. I think he would have been proud.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to lead a colloquy among my colleagues for up to 30 minutes.

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

STIMULUS PACKAGE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the stimulus bill is the subject of discussion. There are some things we know about it and some we don't. We know, for example, it is a massive amount of money, almost \$800 billion. These are numbers we throw around. But according to the Politico newspaper last month, this is more than we spent on Iraq, more than we spent on Afghanistan, more than we spent going to the Moon in today's dollars, and more than the Federal Government spent in the entire New Deal in today's dollars. It's a massive amount of money. It is not like some of the money we were authorizing to be spent in October and November, when we were giving the Department of the Treasury, in effect, a line of credit to help financial institutions begin to lend again so people could get auto loans. This is money we are spending. It goes out the door. We have to pay it back. It adds to the national debt. It took from the founding

of our country all the way to the late 1970s to accumulate a national debt as large as the amount of money we are spending in this bill. We have been moving rapidly on this legislation. It is not only spending. The amount of money spent for education is such that it may be the largest Federal education bill we have ever passed in terms of dollars. The amount of money spent for energy is enough that it will be one of the largest Energy bills. The amount of money spent for Medicaid in the House and Senate bills, nearly \$90 billion over 2 years to the States, may completely distort the discussion we are about to have on national health care policy. These are all topics that normally we would take weeks to consider.

For example, if we are going to add \$40 billion to a Department of Education that only spends \$68 billion today, we would ask the question: \$40 billion for more of the same, or do we have some better ideas about how we might reward outstanding teachers or give teachers more discretion or parents more choices of schools?

I ask the assistant Republican leader from Arizona, this is one of the most important, massive bills. Republicans want a stimulus package. We have made clear we think we ought to start by fixing housing first, letting people keep more of their own money, and confining the spending to only those projects that create jobs.

I ask the Senator from Arizona, where are we? Has he had an opportunity to read the legislation to know how much is being spent, how much is actually targeted for jobs, and how temporary that targeting might be?

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, we do not know yet. I received an e-mail that said the Speaker of the House would be holding a press conference sometime in about an hour. I assume that, therefore, by then they will actually have produced the bill, that there will actually be a bill she can then share with her colleagues in the House and then would come over here and we could begin to read as well.

The answer to the first question is, despite all the discussion, we don't know yet exactly what is in it, how much it is, and what the long-term consequences will be. We do know from news media that certain things in the bill that passed the Senate have been changed. We are also told the basic amount is somewhere in the neighborhood of \$20 or \$30 billion less than the House-passed bill. If that is true, we can make some rough guesses. I will be happy to share what the Congressional Budget Office says about those guesses about future amounts of money.

If I may indulge by setting one bit of background first, when the Congressional Budget Office, the nonpartisan staff for the Congress, develops their cost estimates, they base it on what the language of the bill is and how the bill needs to work in the future. They always provide us with a 10-year cost. That is particularly important because

we hear about the cost of the bill, and we assume that is all there is. The truth is, there is a lot of cost that isn't calculated into the bill. When we hear about a bill that is \$790 billion or \$820 billion, that is not the true cost.

I will give an example. One of the programs in the bill expands Medicaid. It is called the FMAP increase in Medicaid. That went through the Finance Committee. For about 25 years, they calculate the cost of expanding the eligibility for Medicaid. Then they simply assume, because the cost was getting to be too big, that it stops at that point. For the rest of the 5 years for the 10-year total, in effect, the program goes away. Everybody knows the program is not going away. One program that is not going away is Medicaid. The eligible people on Medicaid are not going to suddenly be wiped off the program. Obviously, Congress will continue the program. What CBO had to do is calculate not only the first-year cost or the 5-year cost but what will it cost over 10 years. They have done the same thing with Head Start, Early Head Start, title I education—incidentally, there is something about all these programs; they do not in any way create jobs or stimulate economic growth, as they are social programs deemed to be a good thing but having nothing to do with stimulus—the LIHEAP program, the National Institutes of Health, COBRA insurance coverage, Medicaid, and other programs.

What CBO did was to take the House bill and calculate the true cost over the 10-year period. When one does that, it jumps from \$820 billion to over \$2.5 trillion. Then add in the interest payments on that amount which are about \$744 billion. The total deficit impact, then, over the 10-year period would be \$3.27 trillion. Assume that the bill might be slightly less expensive than what CBO is estimating, it is still, obviously, going to be in the neighborhood of \$3 trillion over 10 years.

It is important to look at expenses over an extended period because, as the Senator noted, this is borrowed money. This is not money we have today. We are borrowing it. Therefore, the long-term consequences of that borrowing are important. What the CBO also said was that by the 10th year, we are actually going to be creating negative economic growth. The GDP will grow by between .1 and .3 of a percent less in the year 2019 than it would if we hadn't even passed this bill.

I compare it to kids eating sugar. They get a sugar high. They have all kinds of energy for a while. But when they crash, we have seen what that can be. While some of this might be stimulative early on, once the sugar high is gone, we are going to be left with the longer term consequences. Over this 10-year period the CBO has to calculate, we are talking about getting into negative economic growth, over \$3 trillion in cost.

The question is, At that point, what is that going to do to our economy? I

don't think anybody can say it is good news. But it is the kind of thing we have been talking about, to think about the long-term consequences of what we are doing. If one is gambling with a couple hundred million, that is one thing. Start gambling with \$3 trillion, one better be right. I don't think anybody can say, with any degree of certainty, that what is in this legislation we can doggone guarantee is going to work and be worth the expenditure.

Mr. ALEXANDER. As I listen to the Senator, what occurs to me is, we have some laws about truth in labeling, truth in packaging. This bill wouldn't meet any definition I have ever seen. The whole argument for this legislation is, we are in an economic downturn. We Republicans know that. Americans are hurting. We feel that too. So we thought, what can we do to help make a difference? The thought was, fix housing first. We suggested lower interest rate mortgages. We suggested, with the leadership of Senator ISAKSON, a \$15,000 tax credit for home buyers for the next 2 years to create more demand to stabilize home values. Those ideas would have been actually stimulative. But most of the legislation the Senator from Arizona talks about is very different. Medicaid would come up in the regular appropriations process.

As I am thinking about it, what has the Senator heard about one of the aspects of this bill that would be actually stimulative, the one I mentioned, Senator ISAKSON's proposal for a tax credit of \$15,000 for home buyers, so that if they bought a home, they would get \$15,000 off their taxes, cash in their pocket, as a way of stimulating the market? Is that in the compromise legislation?

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I say to my colleague, obviously, we don't know because we haven't read it. But what my staff believes, from contact they have had with other staff, is that in order to make room for a bunch of other spending, that incentive program has been slashed. The amount of money has at least been cut in half. The people eligible to take advantage of it have been narrowed to first-time home buyers. There would be an income cap. I think now that CBO would score that somewhere in the neighborhood of about \$2 billion, meaning that the impact of it on the economy could not be particularly significant.

May I mention one other thing, because it reminded me of another idea that we had. We had a lot of good ideas because we wanted to make sure this would work. We mentioned, several of us, the fact that 80 percent of the jobs are created by small business. So we looked in the bill to see where the relief would be targeted to small businesses to encourage them to hire more folks. When we finally found what was in there, it amounted to .8 of 1 percent of all of tax provisions in here that could be utilized by small business, hiring 80 percent of the jobs. Only .8 of 1

percent of the bill is dedicated to those kind of businesses as tax relief.

So when we talk about targeted, well, our idea of targeting relief obviously does not comport with the authors of the bill, and that is another one of the real questions and concerns we have about this legislation.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, if I could ask the Senator from Arizona one more question.

Over the last couple days, we have heard testimony from the Secretary of Treasury about the importance of moving now to help strengthen financial institutions so they can lend money, so people can buy cars, buy homes, send their kids to college. We have heard about the importance of the housing plan that is coming. We have heard numbers of \$1 trillion, \$2.5 trillion. We have had testimony from experts outside the administration who have estimated that the so-called bad bank option for taking toxic assets out of banks might need \$2 trillion and that we ought to capitalize that bank at several hundred billion dollars.

I ask the Senator, is it possible, if we spend the whole piggy bank on this so-called stimulus package, we will not have the dollars left to get the economy moving again by fixing housing and strengthening our financial institutions?

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I say to the Senator from Tennessee, a friend of mine has a saying that probably applies here: You broke the code. That is one of the big problems. We know we are going to need a massive amount of money to deal with the housing problem and to deal with the credit problem so when you go to the bank, they will have money to lend to you.

Because this so-called stimulus bill is taking so much borrowed money—well over a trillion dollars just in the first 2 years; \$3 trillion over 10 years—there is a real question about how much money we can afford to spend on these other things that, as you note, are absolutely critical. There will come a point in time when the people who buy U.S. debt—primarily foreign governments and foreign entities now—are going to believe we are so heavily in debt they are not going to trust our debt or be willing to give us as good a rate on that debt, the result of which there will come a tipping point when we cannot afford to borrow anymore. By, in effect, wasting a lot of it on this stimulus bill, I think the Senator's question is exactly on point: Will we have what is necessary when the real time comes?

If I could finish with an analogy. Some of my friends on the other side have said: Well, when the house is on fire, you just go put it out. You don't worry about how much water it takes or whatever. Well, that is fine, unless the fire is going to spread to the second house and the third house and the fourth house. You better not waste all your water on the first house. That is the essence of the question from the

Senator from Tennessee, and I think it is a very good point. I thank him.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Or to put it another way: Don't dump the water out on the street and fertilize the field if you need to throw it on the house.

Mr. KYL. Right.

Mr. ALEXANDER. We have a limited amount of water, a limited amount of money. I note the Senator from Arizona as well as I both voted to give President Obama the money he needed to work on housing and to work on financial institutions, and we may have to do it again. So it is not just a matter of saying no to proposals; it is a matter of being greatly disappointed this legislation is not targeted, is not temporary.

The Senator from Wyoming is in the Chamber. He has been an outstanding spokesman on the importance of the stimulus legislation, how to fashion that. I ask the Senator from Wyoming, as he looks at this legislation—and I know we have not yet seen the entire compromise—but how satisfied is he the legislation focuses on the problem that will actually create new jobs for Americans in a short period of time?

Mr. BARRASSO. Well, Mr. President, that is my biggest concern. I make a point of getting home to Wyoming every weekend. I have been to Wyoming just last weekend and the weekend before that and the weekend before that and this is what the people of Wyoming want to know. Is this money going to be well spent? Are they going to get value for their taxpayer dollars?

Similar to the other Members of this body, I have not yet seen a copy of the final proposal. But I think the answer, from what I see of the little snippets, is the value is not there for taxpayers. In today's Investor's Business Daily there is a front-page story, and the headline is "Stimulus Bill Funds Programs Deemed 'Ineffective' by OMB"—the Office of Management and Budget. Stimulus bill funds programs deemed ineffective.

Well, if they are going to be ineffective at stimulating the economy, my question is: Why are they in a stimulus bill? The people at home get it right. This past Saturday I was at a Boys & Girls Clubs function. We had 700 people trying to help our Positive Place For Kids in the community, and many of them talked to me about this and said: We want to help. We want a program that will succeed. We need a program that will help our Nation and will help our economy. But they say, every dollar you put into this that is not really targeted and timely—and then, of course, temporary—every dollar that is spent that is not stimulating the economy is an extra dollar we or our kids or our grandkids are going to owe to people from around the world—owe to the Chinese, owe to others—and that is not the way to have a strong economy for our Nation.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I wonder if I might ask the Senator, he has been especially effective as a

spokesman for the importance of fixing housing first. Many of us, especially on this side, believe housing got us into this mess and helping housing restart will get us out of the mess. Can you explain why there seems to be, in a nearly \$1 trillion bill, so little focus on housing?

Mr. BARRASSO. Well, I think they did not focus where they should have put the focus, which is where we got into the problem in the first place and that was housing. I believe this body said unanimously we need to fix housing first, and we put in a significant amount of money: a \$15,000 tax credit, tax relief for people who buy a house, to get the economy moving in the area that got us into the problem in the first place. Then—while we have not seen the bill yet—that has been stripped away, I understand, in this new compromise between the House and the Senate, and they have taken billions out of it, to a very small number, where it is \$8,000 for certain, limited numbers of first-time home buyers.

So there is a significant decrease in dealing with housing. But there is money in for all sorts of other things that will not effectively help our economy, and that is what I have trouble with. I am looking for something I can support, can vote for. President Clinton's economic adviser, Alice Rivlin, said there should be something much smaller, something that is targeted at the problem. Because, to me, this seems rushed. We are making rushed judgments on energy, education, health care that, to me, do not belong in a stimulus package. We should be focused on what got us into the problem in the first place. That, to me, is housing.

So we can go on about other problems I see with this legislation. People all say to me: Hey, how are you going to judge success? I say: Well, the American people are going to judge success. They will be the ones to decide whether this will be a successful program. If people believe things are working and the Government is working for them, then terrific. But if the people of America feel the burden of this whole package—the burden is on them with inflation, with increased taxes, with less buying power, with more Government rules—well, then, the people of America will judge this to not be a successful package.

But whether it is throwing water on a fire or breaking the piggy bank, the people of Wyoming think of this as we are using so much money, we are shooting all our bullets at once, and we are not going to have any ammunition left over if we have to come after this again.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Wyoming for his leadership, especially as a spokesman on the importance of fixing housing first, which we believe the American people have gotten that message, but apparently the majority writing this bill has not gotten that message.

The Senator from South Dakota has arrived. He is vice chairman of the Republican conference, one of the leaders, too, in this debate. I have heard him speak about the importance of this legislation for stimulus being temporary and targeted. Actually, to give credit where credit is due, I believe we borrowed that phrase from the Speaker of the House, who said last year that stimulus packages, programs to create jobs for the American people, should meet the test of temporary, timely, and targeted.

I ask the Senator from South Dakota, specifically in light of the McCain amendment, which was offered—which you may want to describe—whether he looks at this compromise which is coming our way as temporary, timely, and targeted on the problem of creating jobs for Americans?

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I appreciate the Senator from Tennessee yielding and the comments of my colleague from Wyoming in focusing this debate where it should be, on things that are actually stimulus, that actually do create jobs in the economy, that actually do stimulate the economy and create growth and economic opportunity for more Americans.

I would say to my colleague from Tennessee that there are lots of things about this bill that do not meet that criteria, that do not meet that definition. You used the phrase "timely, targeted, and temporary." I would argue that much of the substance of this bill is much different than that. In fact, it is slow, it is unfocused, and it is unending.

Again, we do not know exactly what is in it, unfortunately, because we have yet to see the bill. All we know is it is going to be somewhere in the neighborhood of \$800 billion in face amount. When you add in the interest to that—some \$350 billion—you are talking about almost \$1.2 trillion in obligations we are handing off to future generations.

I think whenever you talk about that, you need to make sure you are understanding what you are getting for that amount of investment and what that means to future generations. For example, a lot of people do not realize or think about the debt we have today. The gross Federal debt is \$10.7 trillion. Now, that means that every man, woman, and child in the United States owes approximately \$35,000. That is their personal part of the Federal debt. CBO projects the fiscal year 2009 deficit to be \$1.2 trillion before—before—any additional stimulus measures are considered. So when you start adding that in, the deficit as a percentage of our gross domestic product will be 10 percent, which is the highest level—the last time we saw that kind of a deficit-to-GDP ratio was back in 1945 when it was 8 percent. That is the amount of debt we are talking about.

I heard my colleague from Tennessee say before that this generation of

Americans will be the first generation of Americans who will not have the same standard of living as their parents. If you think about what we are doing, we are making matters much worse. We have a lot of young people out there who do not have a voice in this debate. I would characterize them as the "silent generation" who are not going to be heard. Somebody needs to be their voice in this debate too. Somebody needs to bring some rhyme or reason to what is happening here and hope we can get something reasonable passed through the Senate that is focused on job creation, that is temporary, that is targeted, that is timely—all the things we have talked about should be but this bill is not.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, if I could ask the Senator from South Dakota: As I recall, Senator MCCAIN offered one amendment which almost all of us voted for, which was very targeted and cost about \$400 billion, but he also offered another amendment which would have guaranteed that whatever was passed actually be temporary.

Mr. THUNE. Yes, that is correct. We had an opportunity to vote on a number of alternatives. The McCain alternative, which you and I both supported, was one that, in my judgment, made a lot of sense because it got you about twice the effectiveness, twice the job creation, at half the cost.

It was focused, as you mentioned earlier, and as our colleague from Wyoming mentioned, on the central issue of housing, which is so critical to bringing our economy back on a pathway to recovery. It also focused on tax relief for middle-income Americans and for small businesses which are responsible for creating most of the jobs in this country. It had an appropriate focus on infrastructure, which many of us agree is an area that can create jobs. It also had a trigger in there, a hard trigger that said when you have two consecutive quarters of economic growth, the spending would cease or would terminate. In other words, when we start to get our way out of the recession, we would actually bring some fiscal responsibility to this debate.

What troubles me about where we are going with this particular bill right now is it does not have that. In fact, much of the spending in here is long term and extends well beyond the so-called period we are looking at in terms of getting some stimulus into the economy. Many of the commitments that are made, many of the obligations will be obligations we are going to experience for months and years to come. Much of the spending in the bill is on what we call mandatory spending; in other words, spending that will be factored into the baseline and that we are going to be responsible for going into the future.

Senator MCCAIN's amendment would have addressed that issue. It would have brought some fiscal responsibility to this proposal. Unfortunately, it was

defeated. But that being said, there are lots of things in here that still I think the average American, when they look at this, they will wonder: What is Washington doing, and why are they spending money on these sorts of things?

I am looking here at another proposal: \$750 million for the replacement of the Social Security Administration's National Computer Center. Now, that is almost a billion dollars we are talking about, and you have to ask the question: What does this do to create jobs? How is it that this in any way stimulates anything other than perhaps some jobs in a government agency in Washington, DC? We have \$2.5 billion to turn Federal buildings into green buildings; \$1 billion for the U.S. Census; \$850 million in new subsidies for Amtrak; \$650 million in additional funds for digital TV conversion boxes; \$645 million for new and repaired facilities at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; \$448 million for the headquarters of the Department of Homeland Security in Washington; \$300 million for new cars for government workers; \$228 million to the State Department for information technology upgrades; \$125 million for the Washington, DC, sewer system; \$20 million for the removal of fish barriers. These are all things that are included. I forgot this one: \$3 million tax benefit for golf carts, electric motorcycles, and ATVs, provided they don't exceed 25 miles per hour. These are all things that are in this legislation, and I think it would be very hard to convince the majority of the American people these have anything to do with stimulus.

Furthermore, as the Senator from Tennessee has very appropriately pointed out on many occasions, with some of the spending in here, what the States are asking for in terms of assistance—because many of them have shortfalls in their budget. My State is an example of Medicaid now constituting a bigger portion of our State's budget. It was 15.83 percent of the State's budget in 2000, and in 2008 it was 23.33 percent of the budget—a dramatic increase. What we are talking about is sending a lot more money out there. I have heard the Senator from Tennessee talk about it as the States asking for a life raft, and we are sending them the yacht from Washington, DC—

Mr. ALEXANDER. And we are going down to the bank and borrowing the money in their name?

Mr. THUNE.—to do it, almost eight times the amount of money they would need just to cover additional enrollment due to the downturn. Eight times the amount the States would need to get that done is what we are going to be shipping out there and, as the Senator from Tennessee mentioned, borrowing from future generations and piling on to that \$35,000 that every man, woman, and child in America already owes as their part or their share of the Federal debt.

This is a very bad direction, in my view, to be heading for the country. I think we have had some opportunities to improve the bill, to make it better. We have had some alternatives offered. The McCain alternative which the Senator mentioned was one that I think, again, was very well balanced, focused on housing and tax relief and infrastructure and had the kind of fiscal responsibility and discipline in it that makes sure a lot of the spending doesn't go on ad infinitum—forever.

So I would concur with the points and the arguments that have been made by my colleague from Tennessee and say that we ought to be thinking not just about today but about the next generation because we have always had a history in this country—for 200 years Americans have sacrificed to make the next generation's lives better, to create a better life for our children and grandchildren. We are asking our children and grandchildren to sacrifice for us. That is a reversal of 200 years of American history. For generation after generation after generation, we have attempted to build a better, brighter, more prosperous future for our children and grandchildren. What we are essentially asking them to do is to loan us \$1 trillion to do these things—some of which I mentioned and that I think are just completely outside the realm of anything that fits within the mission of job creation or stimulating the economy—at enormous cost to them because it is going to pile additional debt on top of the \$35,000 they already owe, their share of the Federal debt we have today.

So I hope in the end people will come to the realization that this is a mistake and that we will see the necessary votes to defeat it and perhaps go back to the drawing board and put something together that really does, in fact, address the fundamental problem we are facing in the country right now, to get the focus back on housing, to get the focus back on the American people and families and small businesses, and to make sure we are doing it in a fiscally responsible way.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank the Senator from South Dakota. I imagine my 30 minutes has expired, but seeing none of my colleagues, I ask unanimous consent for up to 10 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from South Dakota for his eloquent words. The numbers being thrown around are so huge—and numbers get thrown around so often in Washington, DC—that it is sometimes hard to distinguish between \$1 million and \$1 trillion or \$1 billion or \$10.

One thing I was thinking of as the Senator from South Dakota was speaking, I believe he said as much as 10 percent of the gross domestic product of the United States would be the size of this year's Federal deficit. What that means is, this country—even in these

bad times—is such a marvelous country that we will produce about 25 percent of all of the money in the world just for Americans, 5 percent of the people in the world. So what we are saying is, just this year we are going to run up a debt of 10 percent of 25 percent of all of the money in the world and add it to the national debt we already have and which we already know we are going to be increasing because of the responsibilities we have to try to help fix housing and encourage the financial institutions to support the efforts that the President is making to get the economy moving again.

What we are asking is, why would we spend the whole piggybank on a \$1 trillion piece of legislation that isn't targeted to create jobs when we have so many other pressing responsibilities for this limited amount of borrowed money—namely, fixing housing and getting lending moving again? That is where we would put our attention. So we have a lot of questions about the bill.

As the Senator from South Dakota said, Republicans offered our legislation, which was voted down, and it focused on housing, it focused on letting people keep more of their own money and on a limited amount of spending for targeted, job-creating infrastructure projects. That saved \$500 or \$600 billion which could have been reserved for housing, for lending, or to reduce the debt. But this bill, I am afraid—and we will know more about it as it comes—is mostly spending instead of mostly stimulus. Not enough of the jobs come quickly enough to make as much difference as this borrowed money should make. Even most of the tax cuts in the bill aren't stimulative. They may be welcome, they may leave 13 more dollars in your paycheck each week. But is running up the debt this much more worth that? This is a lot of money—according to one report, more than the Federal Government spent in the entire New Deal, more than we spent in Iraq, more than we spent in Afghanistan, and we should spend this money carefully.

As the Senators from South Dakota and Arizona have pointed out, what happens after 2 years? The Senate rejected our amendment that said once the economy recovers, the new spending stops so we don't continue to run up an unimaginable debt.

States are having trouble and in a shortfall. Tennessee has a \$900 million shortfall this year. But we are sending Tennessee, according to the latest estimates—even with the cuts and the compromise—about \$3.8 billion. We are establishing policy without even thinking about it. In this legislation, which has never been to the authorization committees, we are having possibly the largest, I believe, Federal education bill in our history in terms of dollars. We are having one of the largest health care bills. We are having one of the largest energy bills. That is not the way we make energy, education, and

health care policy—just by passing an appropriations bill with a huge amount of money.

We are very disappointed about the lack of bipartisanship. We respect our new President. We want him to succeed because if he succeeds, our country succeeds. We expected that in this first major piece of legislation, a number of us would sit down on both sides of the aisle and compare our notes and say: Let's go forward. We know the Democrats have the majority and we have the minority, and so more of their ideas are going to be included than more of our ideas, but 58 Democrats and 3 Republicans is not a bipartisan effort. That is not the way we do things around here.

The way we do things in a bipartisan way around here is when we had the Energy bill in 2005 and Senator Domenici and Senator BINGAMAN worked side by side. All ideas were considered. We had our votes. It took weeks and we got a big result. Another example is when we passed the America COMPETES Act and we worked side by side, or even with a contentious area such as intelligence surveillance when Senator BOND and Senator ROCKEFELLER worked side by side and we came to a conclusion together. The American people gained more confidence in what we could do and in the result that we came to. I am afraid in this case we have not had that kind of bipartisanship.

What I fear is that this is not a good sign for the future because this is the easy piece of legislation. This is the first major proposal from the President. This is just a spending bill, albeit a massive spending bill. Next comes health care and controlling entitlements and whether we want to authorize more money to take bad assets out of banks and to help housing. Next comes whether we want to pass this version of climate change or that version of climate change. All of these are difficult pieces of legislation.

I have said on this floor before that President Bush technically did not have to have broad-based congressional support to wage the war in Iraq because he was the Commander in Chief. So he went ahead, and it made the war more difficult. It made his Presidency less successful. "We won the election, we will write the bill" is not a recipe for resolving a difficult problem or for a successful Presidency.

I would hope we can either do as the South Dakota Senator said, which is start over again on this bill and re-target it, make it temporary, make it timely, and save hundreds of billions of dollars while focusing on housing and lending. That somehow we can get the Congress on track with the President so that when we say bipartisan, we do bipartisan, and we don't have an attitude that says, in effect: We won the election; we will write the bill.

Unless the Senator from South Dakota has additional comments—I am finished with mine, so I yield the floor and yield to him.

Mr. THUNE. Who controls the time, Mr. President?

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

Senators are authorized to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to use up to that amount of time.

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

Mr. THUNE. Again, to my colleague from Tennessee, I thank him for his leadership on this issue and particularly for bringing to the forefront of the debate the housing issue which, as so many have mentioned already, really is an integral, essential part of the solution. If we don't deal with that, then I think we are not going to be able to lead our country out of the recession. I don't think anybody will dispute the fact that housing played a very important role in where we are today, and I think trying to recover is going to require a good amount of focus and attention on that issue which, in this bill, is very light. In fact, if you look at what is included in the bill—let me see—1 percent of the Senate bill goes toward fixing housing. Even the \$15,000 new home buyer credit that was reportedly cut in half in the final version of the bill, I am told—and I don't know the answer to this because I have not seen the final bill, nor, I don't think, have any of us seen the details in it—that entire housing tax credit may, in fact, be gone which would eliminate any commitment to helping to repair that aspect of our economy—the housing sector of the economy—which I think is going to be so important in helping us to recover.

So 1 percent of the Senate bill goes toward housing currently, 2.3 percent of the Senate bill goes toward small business tax relief, and, as I mentioned before, small businesses create two-thirds or three-fourths of all of the new jobs in our economy. It seems to me at least that ought to be a very proper and important focus of this legislation.

Of course, some of the alternatives we voted on last week, one of which was the McCain alternative which we referenced earlier, did include a significant amount of incentive for small businesses to invest and to create jobs. I offered a couple of tax amendments to a couple of alternatives to the bill which really did focus on tax relief for middle-income families and for small businesses. That, of course, was defeated as well.

I guess my point is, the bill as we have it in front of us is going to be very much oriented toward spending, and spending on government programs and spending which, in many cases, doesn't go away; that isn't temporary, that, in fact, makes obligations and commitments and liabilities well into the future. We talked about up to about \$200 billion of funding in the bill being what we call mandatory spending; in other words, spending that is built into the baseline, that isn't temporary, and it is hard to see how that

fits into the definition of temporary, targeted, and timely, which was the criteria that was set out by the President and by the Democratic leadership in developing this bill in the first place.

The Senator from Tennessee, when he touched upon the amount of money his State of Tennessee will receive and what the State's need is—and I would repeat what I said earlier, that under this bill, we are not giving States what they have estimated their amount is to cover the increased Medicaid enrollment due to the economic downturn.

We are giving them—if you can believe this—almost eight times the amount of money they would need to cover additional enrollment due to the economic downturn. Why? States, of course, aren't going to refuse it. Which Governor out there will turn down additional resources? It is estimated that States would need about \$11 billion in additional funding to cover enrollment-driven growth in State Medicaid Programs.

Under this bill, we provide \$87 billion with absolutely no strings attached and no requirements that States get their own spending and fraud and abuse under control. I hope we have pointed out—and we will continue to point out—the ways in which the funding under this bill is being spent. Again, I mention some of the particular earmarks here, much of which go to Government agencies: \$20 million for the removal of fish barriers; \$300 million for new cars for Government workers; \$645 million for new and repaired facilities at the NOAA; and \$750 million for the new computer center for the Social Security Administration.

It is hard to argue that these things are stimulus. Perhaps they are needed and, in fact, perhaps ought to be debated, but it ought to be done in the regular order, handled through the normal annual appropriations process, not included in a bill that is being sold to the American people as stimulating the economy and creating jobs. There is little in here I can see that meets that definition.

I want to make a final point with regard to the whole issue of job creation, because the CBO, in a letter dated February 11, 2009, clearly describes the false economic theories behind this Government spending bill. The CBO letter encompasses the majority of the economists' views on this legislation. Specifically, the letter states that beyond the year 2014, this legislation is estimated to reduce gross domestic product by up to two-tenths of 1 percent. The reduction in GDP is therefore estimated to be reflected in lower wages, rather than lower employment. Workers will be less productive because the capital stock is smaller. The legislation's long-run impact on output also would depend on whether it permanently changed incentives to work or save. The legislation would not have any significant permanent effects on those incentives.

Those are quotes from the CBO letter that came out last week. Even the most optimistic CBO projection states that long-run GDP growth will increase by zero percent. Even the most optimistic projection is built on an assumption that all of the relevant investments, on average, would add as much to output as would a comparable amount of private investment.

The Government spending included in the House and Senate bills doesn't change GDP at all due to Government spending crowding out private investment.

Most of us would agree—I think most of us on this side would agree—that we are much better served in terms of creating economic growth and jobs, in seeing that the jobs are created in the private sector, and that we are providing the necessary incentives for investments in new jobs. This bill is very light on the types of incentives that would lead small businesses to go out and invest and do the sorts of things that actually will create jobs and help us recover and build a better and more prosperous future for our children and grandchildren which, as I said earlier, in my view, is in serious jeopardy because of this legislation—primarily because of the enormous amount of borrowing it includes and how much it adds to the debt for every man, woman, and child in America, and \$35,000 is that share of the debt. Under this bill, that would grow \$2,700 per every man, woman, and child in America.

What we are doing to future generations is wrong, it is not fair to them. This Government needs to learn to live within its means. We need to think about building and sacrificing so that our children and grandchildren and future generations will have a brighter future. That is the way it has always been in this country. It is part of our culture and ethic that we work hard and sacrifice so that future generations can have a brighter and better future. This completely turns that whole history, that legacy, we have as a nation on its head by asking future generations to sacrifice for us. That is the wrong thing to do.

I hope we will reject this legislation and go back to the drawing board and do something that is effective and creates jobs and does work and will give the American taxpayer a good return on their investment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas is recognized.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I want to join my colleagues and discuss the spending package that will be back in front of us—the \$800 billion but, with interest, probably \$1.2 trillion, which will be in the package, and it will all be borrowed—every cent of it. We don't have that money presently. So we are going to be borrowing it to do this.

A couple of things strike me. One, we learned last fall—and there is an old saying that is true in government and certainly with individuals as well,

which is “haste makes waste.” I grew up with that saying. People say, look, if you hurry at this and you don't get it right, you are going to have to do it again. We saw that last fall with TARP. We put in \$750 billion because they said we have to do it now and we have to do it fast. But at the end of the day, that haste made waste. The Treasury Department went pillar to post, saying we are going to do this or we are going to do that, and they ended up spending the money. Now we are looking at TARP II and the banks still need help. I have a lot of people back home saying: What happened to the first hundreds of billions of dollars you gave the banks? Haste makes waste. We saw it then.

There is no reason for us to rush to get this wrong on the stimulus package. Yes, we need a stimulus package. My State needs a stimulus package. This country needs it. We need a stimulus package, not a spending bill. If we slow down a little bit—I think we should refer this back to the Committees on Finance and the Appropriations and put a requirement on it that every dollar spent must yield at least \$1.50 in economic activity over and above what is spent.

We should make it a stimulus bill, not a spending bill. We have not done that. We are hastily putting this forward. I believe, tragically, we will be wastefully putting it out. There will be a number of programs that can use the funds, I have no doubt about that. But if the target is to get this economy off its knees and moving forward, we have to hit that target and not a multiple set of targets, and not a set of spending targets that are not stimulative in nature.

There is another saying that President Reagan was fond of using, and it was that there is nothing so permanent as a temporary Government program. That was his experience and it has been mine as well. Once something gets started, it is hard to stop, because it gets a constituency built up around it, and people build up their expectations and infrastructure around it. When you go to eliminate it once it has started, it is like, wait a minute, now this has a multiplier impact on a broader cross-section of individuals. That is why there is nothing so permanent as a temporary Government program.

I think that is probably why some people are looking at starting things under the guise of stimulus that are, in actuality, starting new Federal spending programs with the hope that infrastructure builds up around it and in future years, when it goes to be cut, people will say you cannot do this because it will have this multiplier impact. That is the history of the Federal Government and its growth.

According to a CBO analysis, if most of the new spending programs enacted under the proposed stimulus were to become long-term spending programs—and that is our history and what we have seen in the past—the cost of the

stimulus package would rise to \$2.5 trillion over the next decade, and \$3.3 trillion if you include interest payments on that debt. We are borrowing every cent. You are looking at long-term spending in the \$3.3 trillion category. If you do and you look at a rough outline of this, you are going to move the Federal Government from about 20 percent of the economy, which it has been, up to 25 and possibly 30 percent of the economy. At what time do you come to the tipping point? And that is before you add in the baby boomers retiring and the increased costs in Medicare, and when that baby boomer generation is retired and using the Government programs instead of paying into them. You will get to a tipping point where people cannot afford the tax structure that is needed underneath that. That is not wise for us to do.

In this stimulus bill, we will take the Federal debt in private hands relative to our gross domestic product from below 40 percent of GDP to move it well over 60 percent of GDP. So that will be like saying I have a job and I make \$100,000 a year, and I borrowed \$40,000 that I am paying on, and now I am going to jump it to \$60,000. You are looking at that in this soft economy and saying, is that a smart thing to do? Most people would say, no, that is not the right thing to do. You want to try to stimulate things, not harm them.

Finally is this thought: I don't believe that hastily constructed bills such as this one being sold as stimulative is a plan to help our economy weather this recession. It strikes me as a highly leveraged, speculative bet on larger Government and massive long-term spending as a cure to our economic woes. We have seen what the aftermath of highly leveraged speculative bets can bring. That is what we have gotten into in the first place, where you have had highly speculative leveraged events taking place in the housing market and expanding into credit card use, into automobile loans. A number of homes were bought with 100 or 110 percent borrowing, and they thought the appreciation would pay for that. Those were completely leveraged events. That doesn't bring economic prosperity; it brings bubbles. I don't think you are even going to see that with this one. You are going to see long-term costs. We are going to see speculative debt with the Government using our children as leverage. Is that the way we want to go?

Clearly, the people in my State believe no, and they believe we need a stimulus package, and that we need to work together on a bipartisan package. We should take it through the regular order, through the Appropriations Committee and the Finance Committee, and hold hearings on it, look at what actually works, set a criteria on this. When we had this very rapid, hastily put together TARP legislation—and everybody is mad about that now—we didn't hold hearings on it. We

did it quickly and in closed sessions. Out pops the package, and now we are back at it. I think we will be back at this one also if we don't do what we need to do. But only our ammo box will be empty. We are not going to have anything in it, because haste makes waste. We rush out there trying to get it done and we don't work the process and work together on it. We are not going to hit the target and that will be sad for the American public.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 20 minutes.

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

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, there has been a generous amount of discussion on the floor today about the economic recovery package that has been put together and about the dire conditions of our economy. If you listen, they have been described in so many different ways—financial crisis, deep recession, economic trouble, a wreck, a dire condition—and I suspect almost anybody who has been experiencing trouble in the workplace as a result of this rather steep economic decline would understand all of those terms.

I have been listening to the debate on the floor of the Senate, and I had to come to see if we could add a little clarity to what has caused all this. It is pretty hard to describe a remedy unless you understand what has caused it.

I understand from a lot of discussion a bit ago that there are a lot of people who don't want to do anything or they want to do something much less or they are not sure. In any event, I was thinking of how many people in the Senate lined up to help the banks. The Treasury Secretary said we have to pass legislation to help the big Wall Street banks. He said we have to pass a 3-page bill in 3 days for \$750 billion. Boy, there was a big-old traffic jam trying to get up here to the well to vote in favor of that legislation, helping out all the big banks with hundreds of billions of dollars. Now we are talking about helping someone else out, helping out folks who need jobs, and all of a sudden, there is a big problem. Mr. President, \$700 billion to bail out big banks and steer this economy in the ditch—that is OK, big traffic jam to do that, but some money to help put people get back on payrolls, no, that is deficit spending, we are told.

I showed this chart the other day on the floor of the Senate. There were 35 jobs available in Miami for firefighters, and 1,000 people showed up on the sidewalk and lined up to apply.

For some, it may be easy to come to the floor of the Senate and talk about the 598,000 people who lost their jobs last month, the 1 million people who lost their jobs in the last 2 months, and the 3.6 million people who lost their jobs since this recession began. But name 1, name 10, name 1,000, name 1 million or look at their picture and see the faces of people who want to work but cannot because they were told their jobs no longer exist. Then ask whether this is important, and ask yourself: What are you going to do about it? What do you think the remedy is? What do you think the priority ought to be with respect to putting people, such as these people, back to work: giving them an opportunity with a job or lining up in the well of the Senate to say to the big banks: Here I come; here is \$700 billion. Big difference, in my judgment.

The difficulties we face in this country today are not some natural disaster. This is not Hurricane Katrina that came raging through our country. This is not some disaster over which we had no control. This is an economy which is collapsing and has very serious trouble as a result of specific things that have been done that have been irresponsible.

How on Earth do you describe a solution unless you are willing to admit what has caused it? Let me go through some of it. It is not a question of pointing fingers, it is just a matter of deciding, let's be straight about where we are and how we got here. They will write in the history books about this era and this age. We studied the Gay Nineties. We studied the Roaring Twenties. Somebody will study this age, this age of excess, this carnival of greed in the history books in the future.

So how did we get here? Let me describe it by saying we got, in my judgment, several fundamentally flawed policy changes that happened over a long period of time.

Trade. First of all, you cannot suggest this problem we have does not lay right on the doorstep of those who have allowed this trade deficit in this country to rise to \$700 billion to \$800 billion a year, buying \$2 billion more each day than we sell abroad and racking up a giant deficit for this country that we must repay to other countries. Most of the Members of this body have been perfectly willing to be brain dead on that subject for a long time. Trade doesn't matter, the deficits don't count. Don't worry about jobs going overseas, don't worry about unfair trade agreements, just ignore it and just keep chanting about free trade. That is one big mistake that has been made for a very long time and no more so than during the past 8 years of the past administration.

With a trade deficit of \$700 billion to \$800 billion a year, add to that budget deficits. I know what they say about the budget deficit in the newspaper. OMB puts out a number. I think the

last administration said it is some \$450 billion. That is not true at all. It is not \$450 billion. The question is how much did we have to borrow last year. That is the impact. It is between \$700 billion and \$800 billion, even more depending on whose counting. So with an economy of \$14 trillion or so, a \$700 billion to \$800 billion trade deficit, a budget deficit of somewhere around \$700 billion to \$800 billion, that is 10-percent or so indebtedness in 1 single year.

But it is not just the fact we have this budget deficit that has been so out of whack ever since the last administration took office—and by the way, they inherited a budget surplus. We had a big debate on the floor of the Senate, and those now saying: Let's not do much to remedy this economy, were standing on the floor of the Senate saying: We want to get rid of the budget surplus; we want very big tax cuts for a very long time, most of which will go to the very wealthy. Some of us said: Let's be careful, let's be conservative. No, Katy, bar the door. They passed their legislation. We ran into very big budget deficits in a very big hurry.

Trade deficits, budget deficits—and by the way, a budget deficit that was, in part, constructed by deciding to fight a war and not paying for it. Can you imagine, fighting a war and saying we are going to charge every penny. We say to the American people: You go shopping. That is what President Bush said: Your job is to go shopping. We are going to fight this war. We are going to spend \$10 billion, \$12 billion a month, and we don't intend to pay a penny of it. Some of us who wanted to pay for part of it were told: We will veto the legislation if you try. He said: I will veto the legislation if you try.

Trade deficits and budget deficits have weighed this economy down in a very significant way. And the very folks who have come today to talk about spending and deficits are the ones who supported all along a fiscal policy that created the most significant budget deficits in the history of this country.

Those are not the only two things. They are significant—trade deficit, a budget deficit, reckless fiscal policy. They are significant, but something else happened, something very significant, and I talked about it frequently on the floor of the Senate. The same people who are so concerned about these issues now joined forces to say: You know what, we need to modernize America's banking system. It is way old-fashioned, way out of date. We put in place all kinds of things since the Great Depression to prevent banks from being modernized, and we need to have one-stop shopping. We need to let banks get involved in real estate investments again. We need banks to get involved in securities investments again. And so they passed—yes, the Congress did; incidentally, there was bipartisan support for it—a piece of legislation called the Financial Serv-

ices Modernization Act. It got rid of old-fashioned things that were put in place after the Great Depression and helped create the big bank holding companies that could get involved in securities, real estate, and all kinds of risk ventures attached to banking which we had prevented for 80 years.

All of a sudden, we saw the pyramid created, the big holding companies, and it was Katy, bar the door. What we saw was the buildup of unbelievable leveraged debt in these institutions and a substantial amount of risk brought into America's banking system.

Almost immediately, that system allowed greed to permeate. Here is how it manifested itself in one significant part of the contributor to this economic malaise, and that is the housing bubble and the subprime loan scandal. I have spoken about it at great length—I am sure people are tired of hearing it—the subprime loan scandal. We know people who were cold-called by brokers to say: We know you are paying a 7-percent interest rate. We will give you a 2-percent interest rate, and by the way, you don't have to pay any principal; 2-percent interest rate and no principal, and you don't have to document your income to us. No-doc loan, no principal, 2-percent rate. They put people in subprime loans not telling or emphasizing that it is going to reset in 2 years to 10 percent or 11 percent and you can't prepay because there is a prepayment penalty for doing it.

They larded up a whole lot of securities because they wrapped these into securities with bad loans, bad mortgages, and then sold them upstream to mortgage banks, hedge funds, investment banks. They were all fat and happy, and that included the rating agencies that would take a look at that security and say: That is a good security; that is AAA. They were all in on the take. By "the take," I mean infected with greed. So we had the housing bubble. We had all of these mortgages out there.

Consider this: A \$14,000-a-year strawberry picker buying a \$720,000 home placed by a broker who got a big bonus for placing the mortgage without any chance of that person being able to make payments. But that mortgage then becomes a mortgage wrapped into a security sold to a hedge fund, rated as a security as AAA, sold to an investment bank. Now all of a sudden you have brokers who are happy because they are making massive amounts of money; you have the mortgage banks, they love it, they are making lots of money; hedge funds, they are making so much money they can't count it.

By the way, the top hedge fund manager a year and a half ago earned \$3.7 billion. By my calculation, that is \$300 million a month, about \$10 million a day.

Honey, how are you doing at work?

I am doing pretty well, \$10 million a day. I make as much in 3 minutes as the average American worker does in a year.

They were all happy, all making massive amounts of money. The problem is, they built a pyramid. The scheme of this pyramid is not much different from Mr. Madoff, who apparently allegedly got away with a \$50 billion Ponzi scheme. This scheme was not much different. All of a sudden, it began to collapse.

Huge trade debt, big federal debt, reckless fiscal policy, fighting a war and not paying for it, charging every penny, in fact, insisting on continuing tax cuts even during the war, and then this unbelievable banking scandal by removing the protections that existed since the Great Depression and saying to the big banks: You can create holding companies, you can attach risk, such as securities and other issues, and it will be just fine. You can do that. And so they did. All of it was built on leverage—trade debt, budget debt, leverage debt in the private sector, almost unparalleled in the history of this country. Then the tent pole began to come down. All of a sudden, we discover a very serious problem.

To describe how significant the money that was being paid was, there was a discussion in the last couple of days in the Congress about maybe doing what President Obama suggested; that is, to those big companies that got bailout funds, for the top 25 people in those companies, their compensation should be limited to half a million dollars a year. It is interesting, when they tried to do that, my understanding is there was a budget cost to that of something close to \$10 billion. Why would there be a budget cost? Because they were all making so much money that the income tax they would pay as a result of that money was so significant that you had a \$10 billion budget cost if you limited the income of the top people on Wall Street in these firms to \$500,000 a year. That is almost unbelievable to me. But having done some work to study how much income exists in those areas, that is exactly true.

There was an investigative story in the Washington Post about the failure of one of the largest investment banks. They described the top trader in that organization, a person trading securities and the person who was in charge of risk management. It turns out they carpooled every day from Connecticut to New York. It wasn't very hard to have the top trader deal with his best friend risk manager and get things done pretty easily. The top trader, they said, was making \$20 million to \$30 million a year. So that company turns out to be loaded with toxic assets, as were most of the other institutions engaged in exactly the same business because they were making so much money.

Now we are told the taxpayers have to come to the rescue of these banking institutions. So \$700 billion has been voted in what is called the Troubled Asset Relief Program, TARP. I did not support that legislation. I didn't think

the Treasury Secretary had the foggiest idea what he was doing, and I think history shows that to be the case.

But one of the questions I think needs to be asked at this moment, is: Is there a requirement that we bail out these specific banks? Is that some divine right of existing institutions, to come to the Government to say: We are in trouble, you need to help us. Well, what has happened is the Government has allowed them to become so big they are referred to as being too big to fail. That is an actual specific category at the Federal Reserve Board—too big to fail. Despite the fact that they are bailing them out, our Government—the Federal Reserve Board and the Treasury, which have said these institutions are too big to fail, and have in fact failed and need taxpayer money to bail them out—our Government is actually pursuing mergers to make them bigger. It is unbelievably ignorant, in my judgment, as a policy matter. But I think it is important for us to ask some basic questions here. Do we care about too big to fail; and should we, at some point, decide to take apart those institutions and create different entities, smaller institutions?

I understand we can't tomorrow decide there will not be any major banking institutions in this country. Our country can't function like that. Credit is critical to every business in this country. I know many profitable Main Street businesses that are having great difficulty finding credit from established credit sources they have had for decades. So I understand the urgency and the need for credit from banking institutions. My only observation is this: If we are pushing \$700 billion after failed institutions in order to try to make them well, even as we are saying to them, we want you to become bigger, and when, in fact, they are already too big to fail, I am saying that doesn't add up to me. I think maybe we should have a discussion here in this Congress about whether there is some inherent right to preserve institutions, or whether those that are too big to fail should be perhaps taken apart and create institutions that will better serve this country's interest.

Now, some say there are only two choices in the future as we try to take a look at financial reform. And by the way, there is very little action on that at this point, and I believe it ought to go concurrent with all the discussion about trying to put people back to work and so on. But it seems to me the two choices are: You go back to a world in which you had Glass-Steagall and separation of banks from other inherently risky things, such as securities and real estate. And I believe we should do that. That means banks essentially become very much like a utility. That is the way it was. They were regulated, but generally performing traditional banking functions and making money. Then risky enterprises are over here, regulated in a different

way but nonetheless able to engage in substantial amounts of risk with securities, real estate, and other items.

We have to make that choice, and the sooner the better. I think to ignore that is to suggest, as some are now doing, that what we are going to do is we are going to have taxpayer money chase current institutions that have failed, and perhaps even make them bigger when they are already too big to fail. That makes no sense to me at all.

And that brings me to this issue today of the economic recovery plan that has been negotiated. I don't think anyone comes willingly to this either starting line or finish line with this kind of a plan to say, I am pleased to be here. But I do think this: I see all of the energy of people who rush to try to help the big banks with \$700 billion, and then see so much concern about trying to help people who are out of work, and I say: Wait a second; maybe we have our priorities wrong here. I believe that the economic engine in this country works best when people have something to work with, when American families have a job to go to, a job that pays well and allows them to take care of their family. I think that is a percolating-up kind of strategy with the economic engine, and I think it is perfectly appropriate and important. In fact, I think it is essential for us to worry about trying to put people back to work during a very deep recession.

No one can say that what happened last month doesn't matter. You can't say that 598,000 people coming home at night and telling their loved ones they lost their job doesn't matter to this place. If it mattered to this place that the biggest banks in the country were having some difficulty, and they had to get \$700 billion, why doesn't it matter that we care a little bit about the people who lined up in Miami, FL, a thousand of them, trying to get a little shot at 35 firefighting jobs? This too ought to matter. It is not unfair, as some have suggested last week when I showed this chart, and said I was playing on sympathy. This isn't sympathy. This is reality. Isn't it important that we talk a little about reality and a little less about theory here in the Chamber of the Senate? The fact is these people got up, stood in line, because they need a job, and we ought to be able to do something about that, to try to put people back to work and give this economy a lift.

I think it is pretty clear that no one knows exactly what the medicine is or the menu is to try to make this economy well and healthy once again. But this legislation we are going to be considering contains a couple of things that I put in during this past week when it was considered. One is very simple: If we are going to put people back to work building roads and dams and bridges and so on and so forth, putting people on payrolls to do these projects that will invest in America's infrastructure, then let's try to buy American products while we do it so

that we are putting people on factory floors to produce those products. I am talking about steel and iron and manufactured projects.

When I suggested that we buy American for the major purchases that we are going to make to put people back to work, I did that because I know when we buy those products we will put our people back to work in those factories. But you would have thought I was talking the most radical kind of talk in the world, by the reaction of some—you are going to upset the international balance of trade. That is absurd. We are already so out of balance in trade. We are \$700 billion to \$800 billion in red in trade. At any rate, my legislation is here. So as we try to put people back to work and invest in our infrastructure to create jobs, we should buy American. It is common sense.

The second amendment I put in this piece of legislation is different than anything that has been required with all the other money that has been shoved out the door by the Federal Reserve Board, by the Treasury Department, by the FDIC, and, yes, with TARP, supported by the Congress, and that is a provision that says: I want accountability. If you get money from this economic recovery package, you have to report to us on a quarterly basis that says: Here is who I am, here is the money I got, here is how I used it, and here is how many jobs I created. That kind of accountability, demanding that kind of reporting, is essential for my support for this bill. And that is in this piece of legislation because I put it there last week.

Now, one final point, if I might. I understand, as I have said many times, that in most ways the issue of trying to promote economic recovery in this country is not about some menu. It is not about a menu of tax cuts or more spending. It is not about a menu of M1B or anything of that sort in fiscal or monetary policy. It is about trying to give the American people some increased confidence about the future. That is critical in order to have an expansion of our economy. People have to feel confident about the future in order to act on that confidence—to buy a suit, buy a new washing machine, buy a car, buy a home, take a trip. It is the kind of things people do when they are working and they feel good about the future and their job is secure. They do things that expand the economy.

When people aren't confident, they do the exact opposite, and that causes a contraction of the economy. That is where we are today. People aren't confident about the future. I understand that. I mean, I think all of us know why. They have seen the most significant era of greed perhaps since the 1920s, and they do not like it. They have seen a collapse of the housing bubble, they have seen big investment bankers get rich, they have seen all these things—the scandals—and it is hard to be confident. They have seen the country fight a war without paying

for it. Some people have given their lives. So I understand that we have a lack of confidence. The question is not whether that exists; the question is what do we do about it? Do we decide to do something about it? And if so, what?

I have described often the response of Mark Twain when asked if he would engage in a debate at this organization, and he said: Oh yes, if I can take the negative side. They said, but we haven't even told you the subject yet. He said: Oh, the subject doesn't matter. The negative side will take no preparation.

So I understand how easy it is to simply be opposed to everything. The question now, however, is: What do we do to lift this country? What do we do to help lift this country out of this deep recession and give people some confidence that we are on the right road? Perhaps a trade policy that begins to insist on some balance in trade so we are not deep in the red; a budget policy that at some point says you can't spend what you don't have on what you don't need. You have to have some balance in fiscal policy and you have to recognize that. And you have to have a policy on banking and finance that says we're not going to allow you to do this anymore. We are not going to merge the safety and soundness of banking with speculation and risk in real estate and securities. We are not going to do it. If we would take those steps, it seems to me we would give some substantial confidence to the American people.

Passing the legislation that is going to be proposed today or tomorrow—the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act—is not the easiest thing, I understand, because it is counterintuitive to somehow believe that the way out, when you are deep in debt, is to spend some money. Well, I understand that is counterintuitive. Yet all of the lessons we have learned are that you have to prime the pump to put people back on a payroll. If you have half a million people a month losing their jobs, you have to find a way to put people back on the payroll and to inspire some confidence in the economy again.

I have heard discussions today about, well, I worry about this piece or that piece, and people won't go back to work. I am telling you, I think there are a lot of things in this bill that will put people back to work.

I chair the Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water. We have \$4.6 billion in this with the Corps of Engineers, and the Corps of Engineers will be repairing mostly bridges and water projects—that are designed, engineered, and ready to go. They will be being hiring contractors who will be hiring workers. The fact is there will be a lot of jobs created with this package—we believe 3.5 to 4 million jobs. That is going to make a difference, I believe.

Having described in some cases our disagreements, let me say that I do

think every single person in this Chamber wants the same thing for this country. We perhaps have different approaches to how to get there, but we all want this country to prosper, the economy to be lifted and to recover, for people to go back to work, and for us to have the kind of future that we expect for our children. I believe that is possible. If I didn't believe it was possible, I would hardly be able to go to work in the morning.

Let me tell one story, if I might—I have mentioned it before, a couple of weeks ago—and some people have heard of this. I talked about this guy named Ken Mink from Kentucky, because it is so inspiring. It is so indicative of people in this country who think we can do anything and they can do anything.

Ken Mink, from a news report I read, was 73 years old. He was out in the back yard shooting baskets, and he came in and said to his wife: Honey, it is back. She said what is back? He said: My shot. My basketball shot is back. No matter where I shoot in the back yard, I don't miss. So he sat down that night and wrote applications to colleges—junior colleges—at age 73. He got into a junior college and tried out for the basketball team, at age 73, and made the basketball team. About a month and a half ago, he made two points in a college basketball game. The oldest man, by 40 years, ever to score at a college basketball game, at age 73. I was thinking about that the other day, and I thought: What a wonderful inspirational story, of somebody who didn't understand what he couldn't do. Who says you can't play basketball at age 73 for a junior college some place in Kentucky?

My point is: I think that represents the story of our country. We have so many stories of people who, against the odds, do things that make this a better place. And if we work together and believe in ourselves, and believe in what we have accomplished in decades past and will accomplish in the future, this country is going to be fine. So we are going to get through this week, and hopefully we will give some boost to this economy, and after which I believe we will see an economy that provides more jobs and begins to expand and provides opportunity for American families once again.

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

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

(The remarks of Mr. BENNETT and Mr. WYDEN pertaining to the introduction of S. 426 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. KLOBUCHAR). The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, in the course of debating the economic stimulus legislation, every Senator I have talked to has been interested in trying to find savings to keep down the cost of the economic stimulus bill. I have come to the floor this afternoon because it appears that when the Senate debates the final stimulus legislation, it is not going to include a bipartisan provision to protect taxpayers, a bipartisan provision which would require that Wall Street companies that recently paid excessive bonuses be required to pay those bonuses back to the taxpayers.

Taxpayers in this country were horrified several weeks ago to learn about the fact that recently Wall Street companies that had received TARP financing—TARP, of course, being the Troubled Asset Relief Program—had just paid \$18 billion in bonuses. Once that news became public, everybody in Government spoke out against the bonuses. Everybody lined up in front of the television cameras to say the bonuses were wrong. Everybody said that it was outrageous and unacceptable for these Wall Street bonuses to have been paid when these institutions were receiving billions and billions of dollars of taxpayer money.

After the news, three of us on the Senate Finance Committee—a bipartisan group—said we were going to do more than say the bonuses were wrong; we were going to take steps to make sure the bonuses were actually paid back. So we came together and put forward a bipartisan proposal. We collaborated with law professors across the country and had the Joint Committee on Taxation, under the able leadership of Edward Kleinbard, review the financial underpinnings of the proposal, and they found that our modest approach that would allow taxpayers to be paid back the excessive amount of the cash bonuses would generate \$3.2 billion for American taxpayers—just a fraction of what had been paid out. We felt it was a modest proposal. We felt it was a bipartisan proposal.

The fact is, nobody would oppose our idea in broad daylight, but it now seems that when the ink is dry on the final legislation, the taxpayers of this country are still going to get soaked. It is not right. It is not right because taxpayers in this country have been taking a beating with their health care costs and their fuel costs and trying to figure out how to stay in their homes.

Companies normally pay bonuses when they are doing well. That wasn't the case with these Wall Street financial firms. Here is the math. The Wall Street firms took \$274 billion in taxpayer money. When they weren't doing well, they paid \$18 billion in bonuses, but they couldn't pay the taxpayers \$3.2 billion of the amount paid—the excessive amount paid—in cash bonuses when the taxpayers are being hit in

their wallets, as we all have seen every time we are home and talking to our constituents.

The arguments of the financial firms don't add up to me, and they aren't going to add up to the millions of taxpayers whose money has gone to the financial firms. The taxpayers deserve to see in this stimulus legislation that somebody was actually standing up for them; that it wasn't just about speeches; it wasn't just about saying something was wrong; it was about backing up those words and taking concrete action to protect taxpayers.

So I have come to the floor more than anything else to make it clear that I am a persistent guy, and I am going to stay at this until there is a better accounting for our taxpayers' money, until Congress puts a stop to these kinds of actions where financial firms take taxpayers' money and give the citizens of this country a run-around. This needs to end, and it needs to end now. It means concrete action has to be taken. That means more than speeches.

We know in the days ahead these financial firms are likely to come back to the Congress of the United States and say they need additional sums of money to deal with the toxic loans that are on their books. How can one have confidence about giving these firms additional money when they have just paid bonuses during these tough times and they have fought—I know for a fact—against a reasonable provision to require that these bonuses be paid back.

I intend to stay at this. It concerns me greatly that we didn't have a recorded vote here on the floor of the Senate on this provision. I knew that nobody would oppose this in broad daylight, but I had no idea there would be such an aggressive effort behind the scenes to kill a modest step to protect taxpayers, and particularly to find savings in this legislation. For days now, Senators of both political parties have been talking about ways to hold down the costs. A bipartisan group of Senators found a way—a reasonable way—to save more than \$3 billion, according to the Joint Committee on Taxation.

It is time to put a stop to financial firms taking taxpayers' money and using the money to pay bonuses to many of the same people responsible for the current financial crisis. I am old enough to know that normally you pay bonuses when you do well. That is what the American economy is all about. That is what capitalism is all about. Somehow, some of these institutions think they ought to be able to privatize their gains and socialize their losses. That is not right, and it wasn't right to kill this modest provision to force the repayment of the excessive amount of these Wall Street bonuses.

So I intend to come back to the floor of the Senate on this subject. I will do everything I can to get a fair shake for the taxpayers of Oregon and the taxpayers of this country. I wish this

bonus recovery provision was in the stimulus legislation that will be voted on here in the Senate. I regret greatly that it is not. I am going to stay with this until the taxpayers recover this money that shouldn't have been paid out in the first place.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Madam President, I wish to speak on the pending matter, which is the so-called stimulus plan, with great concern about where we are. As we hear, the plan has been agreed to and the package is being put together; however, we have yet to see it. So I am going to make some assumptions about the things I hear that may or may not be included in it.

It appears we have some clear idea of some things that definitely won't be a part of this package. The fact is that as we approach this problem—and this is a serious problem for our Nation—the President talked about a timely, targeted, and temporary spending package. The President talked about it being timely because we needed to get the money out the door now so that it would get into the mainstream of commerce, so that it could get into the economy so that we could avoid a deep and long-lasting recession. It also needed to be targeted because it made no sense to do those things that would spend money but not create jobs, not create economic activity; the types of tax cuts that are geared toward creating more jobs in the marketplace, not simply to give money to people that may or may not ultimately be spent. It needed to be temporary because we all know that Government spending in excess during a time of a recovery, when the Government should not be overspending, should not be overheating the economy, could lead to a slowdown of the recovery because it would increase inflation.

So that is why, when the President made those comments, I was excited. I was positive. I was very positive in thinking this is exactly what our country needed at this point in time. However, we have found that as this has evolved through the Halls of Congress, that is not what we are getting. We are getting an unfocused spending plan which spends money on things that are far afield from shovel ready, ready-to-get-out-the-door types of projects, but which is really an unfocused spending measure that, in my view and in the view of many others, spends too much at a time when we can hardly afford to be overspending needlessly, but it also does not spend on that which is designed to create the jobs America desperately needs today.

In my view, there are ways we could have crafted a package. I made a proposal because I do believe that to simply oppose what the President proposes and what the majority of this body and across the hall have put together is—it is not enough to just say no, don't do it. We have a responsibility to be re-

sponsible and offer alternatives, to offer a proposal, because at this point in time we know we are in deep and serious economic times. So the key to this is oppose but propose.

The fact is that some of us did attempt mightily to see if we could not come to a bipartisan compromise, a spending package that would have spent about \$650 billion—a very big package of spending. But the spending would have been focused on what I believe would have gotten out the door quickly. We also know it would have been good to spend on things that we needed to spend the money on anyway. In fact, military reset, the resetting of equipment that has been damaged or lost in the long struggles in Iraq and Afghanistan would have been a great way for us to be spending it—those things that we have to spend money on anyway but at the same time be doing so now in a manner that gets it out the door in a hurry.

We have the infrastructure in place for military purchases of equipment. That would have helped. We could have also done more in the infrastructure field. I think this plan is not big enough as it relates to the building of highways and bridges. The fact is that the Presiding Officer well knows the need for bridges. In Minnesota, there is a tremendous need for infrastructure. I wanted to see more bridges. Across this Nation, we have bridges that are failing and need to be rebuilt, and more highways and bridges and infrastructure in that sense would have been the right way to approach it.

Obviously, a part of the package should also be tax cuts geared to job creation. There is a difference between giving money to the people who would use it to pay down debt or hoard and hold it because they are fearful of what is coming in the economy. I believe in more focused tax cuts, such as payroll deduction or the corporate tax rate being reduced, which ultimately is America's small businesses that will put America back to work. Giving those small businesses a tax break would have encouraged them to get people back on the rolls of the employed.

My largest disappointment of all is that this plan fails to address the problem that got us into this mess in the first place. Why did the President and my Governor appear in Fort Myers a couple of days ago? Because that is the foreclosure capital of America, and that is where more houses are being foreclosed than anyplace else in Florida. I was speaking with a group of government officials from Charlotte County, a little north of Fort Myers, where there is 11 percent unemployment and a terrible problem with foreclosures. They said: Please do something about foreclosures. If we can stop houses from being foreclosed, we can do two very important things. We can keep a family in their home and keep that family whole; we can keep that street from having a foreclosed house, and we

keep that community from yet declining further and further in the prices of homes.

In addition, we also do something else; we sustain home values in a way that will help yet another foreclosure from occurring as the declining spiral of housing prices continues to go downhill.

The second one I would have loved to have seen in this package—and I am disappointed to know it is not in there—is the proposal by Senator ISAKSON, which is to give a \$15,000 tax credit to anybody who purchases a home—not just first-time home buyers but anybody. We know one of the great problems in the housing market today is that there is an enormous inventory of unsold homes, many the result of foreclosures. If we encourage potential home buyers by giving them a significant tax break, they would get into the marketplace and make the decision to buy, and we could begin then to stave off this continuing cycle of declining home prices, stalled sales, and more foreclosures.

I know when the President went to Fort Myers, he went there because there is a foreclosure problem. If there wasn't a foreclosure problem in Fort Myers, there would not be double digit inflation in Lee County and Charlotte County. I know my Governor wishes to see this package passed. I don't know that my Governor understands all of the details in the package. There will be nothing here to help with Florida's housing economy, which is the No. 1 problem we have today. Until we address the housing problem, we are not going to bring Florida back to economic health.

There is not enough largess that can come to Florida from the Federal Government to fill the coffers of the State's needs. We need for Florida's economy to get back on its feet. We need tax cuts so that the taxpayers have more money to spend, and we need to work on the housing problem. We need to work on the overall economy of the country so that tourism comes back to our State. All of these things working in unison will bring America back to economic health.

This package, unfortunately, misses the mark. One of the great dangers in it is that at the cost of almost just a hair under \$800 billion, there are not enough additional hundreds of billions that we can safely spend. We have to get it right, because some of us in the Banking Committee this week heard from the Secretary of the Treasury, who told us to get ready, another almost \$2 trillion more is going to be asked of you for the financial institutions. At the end of the day, this is very costly. At some point, continued Government spending isn't going to cut it. So that is why it is so important that this package be gotten right.

I hate to oppose this package, because I would have loved for us to have come up with something that was a truly bipartisan package—not just a

way of getting three votes but a way of, in fact, working together and getting the best thinking of both sides and working on something that was bipartisan. Not working in that fashion has caused some of us to oppose this package. I hate doing that. I wanted to work with President Obama. I wish our new President well, and I hope the package succeeds and has the desired effect. In my conscience, I cannot support it because I don't feel it will do what this economy currently needs or that it will do what in fact all of us need to work together toward doing, and that is getting our country back on the road to recovery.

With great regret, I will not be able to support this package. I look forward to seeing the final outcome because we have not all read the bill yet. I will analyze it again to see if the component parts are there that will allow me to support it. But it appears clear to me, in the information we have, that that in fact will not be the case. I am increasingly disappointed, but at the same time my hope is that it will succeed because, at this moment, at this juncture in history, we need for our country to be successful, so that Americans can get back to work and our Nation can get back to prosperity.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I have been listening to the remarks of the Senator from Florida. I find myself in agreement with him. I want to elaborate a little bit. For that reason, I ask unanimous consent that my 10 minutes be extended to 15 minutes should I need that time.

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

The Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. INHOFE pertaining to the introduction of S.J. Res. 10 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. INHOFE. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise to express my opposition to the conference report that has been granted and put together accompanying the American recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, more commonly known as the stimulus package.

When I spoke on the floor last week about my disappointments in the Senate version of the stimulus bill, I did not think the bill would get much worse in conference. In fact, I harbored some hope it would actually improve. Unfortunately, I was wrong.

What we have seen emerge from the conference weakens the stronger provisions of the Senate bill and worsens the less effective provisions.

Many Utahans have called and written me to express their concerns about this stimulus package and the process by which it has been legislated. They

are rightly worried about the consequences of an economic stimulus package that, with interest, will cost taxpayers well over \$1 trillion. That is just the beginning, by the way. They are particularly worried it will be ineffective in saving or creating jobs.

Last year, President Obama's campaign was based on "hope not fear." That is until he needs fear to help him pass a bill, as Charles Krauthammer of the Washington Post points out. The pressure is on the majority to convince the American people this is the right economic package.

On Tuesday, President Obama spoke to the American people, not about the audacity of hope but rather to instill fear into Americans. He said at that time:

A failure to act will only deepen the crisis as well as the pain of Americans.

He also said:

The Federal Government is the only entity left with the resources to jolt our economy.

While I do not disagree with these statements, it is wrong to use fear to force the completion of an unbalanced, largely partisan package that the Congressional Budget Office estimates will create at most 1.9 million jobs by the end of 2011 and leave us with a lower gross domestic product in 10 years than if we do nothing at all.

Keep in mind, the head of the Congressional Budget Office is a Democratic appointee.

It is clear we are in an economic recession and that action is needed to stimulate the Government. I think every one of our colleagues agrees with this. What troubles me is the misperception about why most Republicans are opposed to this bill. The President and many of our Democratic colleagues have unfairly implied that Republicans prefer to do nothing. That is absolutely not true. Yes, we are opposed to this bill, but we are not opposed to stimulating the economy. We simply want to do it in the most effective and least wasteful way as possible. We do not want to see us make a \$1 trillion mistake, and this is a \$1 trillion-plus mistake.

Yet we Republicans were shut out of negotiating the final conference report, which is something President Obama vowed to the American people he would change. According to President Obama's Presidential campaign Web site, change.gov, he vowed to "end the practice of writing legislation behind closed doors."

Specifically he said he would "... work to reform congressional rules to require all legislative sessions, including committee mark-ups, and conference committees, to be conducted in public."

That certainly did not happen here. I believe this bill could be much more effective and so does President Obama. At his Tuesday press conference, he admitted as much when he said:

I cannot tell you for sure that everything in this plan will work exactly as we hope.

That concerns me. If we plan to spend an amount equal to the 15th

largest economy in the world, we ought to make sure the stimulus plan is drafted in the most effective way possible.

For example, many economists say the make work pay tax credit provision in the plan, which will give workers roughly \$15 more a week in each paycheck, will largely be ineffective in stimulating the economy. It is not going to help the economy. Yet it is a tremendous cost, around \$150 billion, that could have easily been spent on something that would help the economy, create jobs. I suggested the research and development tax credit by making that permanent. I cannot begin to tell you how that would keep our unqualified lead in the high-tech world.

My objection to this bill is not based on the fact it includes spending, it is because it lacks an effective balance of spending and tax relief.

If we look closely at the bill, we will see that much of what the majority lists as tax relief is actually spending. In other words, those who do not pay any income taxes, as well as State and local governments, are receiving money through the Tax Code. How can there be tax relief to those who do not pay taxes? That is more taxes for those who do. Tax relief from what? I am not saying those who do not pay income taxes should not benefit from this stimulus package. I am saying if you are going to give money to people who do not pay taxes, call it what it is—it is spending, it is not tax relief.

Like I say, I would far rather would have had a permanent research and development tax credit, which would cost about only two-thirds of what they are going to spend on this so-called make work pay provision that would create millions of jobs in America and throughout the world.

In fact, when one adds up all the provisions in the bill, more than 70 percent is spending and less than 30 percent is real tax relief. Where is the balance? Even worse, only one-half of 1 percent of this bill—one-half of 1 percent of this bill—is devoted to tax relief to help struggling businesses keep their doors open. One-half of 1 percent—that is pathetic. We know small business produces most of the jobs. Yet this is what we are doing. Moreover, the bill fails to adequately address the housing crisis. Unfortunately, the \$15,000 tax credit for home buyers, which is one of the few bipartisan amendments accepted into the Senate bill during the Senate debate, has now been watered down drastically. So has the other major bipartisan amendment added on the Senate floor—the deduction for interest on a new auto loan. And one of the few provisions to help struggling companies keep their doors open—the expanded period for carryback net operating losses—has been erased from the conference report, except for small businesses.

Now, I have some news for my Democratic colleagues. Small businesses are not the only companies that are laying

off workers. Allowing companies to get quick refunds of taxes previously paid was one of the few smart and efficient provisions in the Senate bill, designed to directly save jobs. Now that has been whittled down to a mere shadow of what it was.

I worry that my friends on the other side of the aisle are looking through rose-colored glasses, spectacles tinted by spending priorities, such as expanding Government programs, which they hope will stimulate the economy. They are trying to convince America that spending millions on Government vehicles will somehow stimulate the economy. They refuse to listen to even the President's Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, Christina Romer, who in a study determined that every dollar of Government spending increases the gross domestic product by \$1.40, while every dollar of tax relief increases the gross domestic product by \$3. That is what the study says. The President's own Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers says that \$1 of Government spending equals a \$1.40 increase in GDP, but if you do it in tax relief, \$1 will give you a \$3 increase in GDP. Doesn't take too many brains to figure out it is far better to do it the second way.

The Congressional Budget Office recently estimated that the Senate version of this so-called stimulus package would only save or create between 600,000 and 1.9 million jobs by the end of 2011. At a cost of \$1.2 trillion, including interest, the cost to the taxpayer for each job saved or created under the plan is at least \$632,000 and as much as \$2 million if that goes up. We are spending taxpayer money to create one job at the rate of \$632,000 per job.

Now that the Senate bill has been scaled back significantly, this job-creation estimate is almost sure to go down significantly. We can do better than this, Mr. President. This is not good enough for Government work. With the amount of money spent in this bill, you could give every man, woman, and child in America \$4,000. I think Utahns and all Americans would put \$1.2 trillion to better use than what this bill does.

A large share of this stimulus bill will go to States to implement temporary programs. When that funding runs out, what do we tell all of those employees who were hired and now have to be let go? Will we say: Sorry, this is just a temporary job. Who are we kidding? This makes about as much sense as denying an undefeated football team the chance to play in the national championship game. I know that sounds a little bit like sour grapes since the University of Utah was the only undefeated team this last year but had absolutely zero chance to play in the national championship game.

The majority knows the American people want to see more tax relief in this stimulus bill. A February 9 poll conducted by the Rasmussen Report found that 62 percent of U.S. voters

want the plan to include more tax relief and less Government spending. It appears as if the more time Americans have to review this bill, the less they like it. That is certainly the case for me.

While time is of the essence, we cannot afford to get this wrong. The stakes are too high. Yet President Obama has chosen to break the theme of his Presidential campaign and use fear to hurriedly pass this flawed economic stimulus package. Now, I am not sure I can blame him for that because he is stuck with what the people up here have done to him and to what he said he would do. So I suppose he was limited to using fear to get this package passed. I have a lot of respect for him. I personally have helped him, and I intend to help him more. But, gee whiz, this is pathetic.

Mr. President, we Republicans realize the severity of this economic situation. We recognize the need to stimulate the economy with a balanced stimulus package that has an appropriate mix of spending and real tax relief. We want to create jobs and spur economic growth. But haste makes waste, and, like many of my constituents, I believe our efforts are about to be wasted—squandered on a stimulus bill that will stimulate more criticism and feeling of futility than the economy.

The great American poet and abolitionist John Greenleaf Whittier wrote:

For of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: "It might have been!"

And while those words were written more than a century ago, they can certainly be applied now to Congress. Faced with serious recession, we need to do our very best to get the economy moving again. Instead, it looks as if this body will settle for a partisan bill that could well fail to do the job our Nation requires. We should do better. We could do much better. The American people need us to do much better. And if this legislation passes, many of us will one day shake our heads at the opportunity lost and wonder aloud about what might have been.

I have told a few people over the last number of weeks who have blamed both parties for what has gone on here over the last number of years that I have been here 33 years and there hasn't been 1 day in the Senate that I can point to where a fiscal conservative majority has been in control of the Senate—not 1 day in 33 years—because there are always enough liberal Republicans, combined with the mostly all liberal Democrats, to do just about anything they want to in spending. It is discouraging, I have to admit. We have won some battles because we have outworked the other side or we have had a President who has made a difference on some issues, no question about it. But not 1 day that I can recall where, if you count the liberals on our side and the liberals on the Democratic side and you put them together—it is usually only five or six, really, on our side—we always have the majority on

the other side. That is why President Bush was hammered all the time for his spending programs when, in fact, his budgets were at all times less than what we ultimately passed here in both Houses.

Mr. President, I would like to now take a few minutes to talk about the health care provisions in this so-called stimulus package or, more appropriately, the next installment of the "Socialized Health Care for All Act of 2009." Democrats hate to hear that. They think it is terrible to hear the word "socialism."

President Obama recently made the media rounds stating that any delay in passing this Government spending package would be inexcusable and irresponsible. Well, today I am going to highlight certain health care provisions in this Trojan horse legislation that, in the President's own words, should be classified as inexcusable and irresponsible.

First and foremost, let me make this point again, even though I am starting to sound like a broken record. Reforming our health care system to ensure that every American has access to quality, affordable, and portable health care is not a Republican or Democratic issue, it is an American issue. When we are dealing with 17 percent of our total economy, it is absolutely imperative that we address this challenge in an open and bipartisan process.

Think about it. We are going to talk about this for just a minute. Just like the partisan SCHIP exercise preceding this bill, this stimulus legislation is another example of the Democrats justifying the current economic turmoil to simply expand our entitlement programs and make the Federal Government bigger. More and more Americans are being pushed into Government-run health care programs. Special interests have taken priority over families; politics, of course, over policy.

In this time of national crisis, we should have come together as one group to write a responsible bill for the American families who are faced with rising unemployment and dropping home values. Instead, the other side has simply chosen to turn this into a government-expansion exercise and a grab-bag of favors for the liberal special interests.

I continue to hope that the other side's promise of change was more than a campaign slogan that did not expire on November 4, 2008. Let's all remember: Actions speak louder than words.

Let me start with the COBRA provisions in this package. The Senate version of the stimulus includes more than \$20 billion in subsidies for health insurance premiums for those who have lost their jobs in these tough economic conditions. However, this subsidy will only go to those Americans who had access to COBRA coverage through their employers.

Now, let me put this inequity into perspective. If you worked for a large employer, such as Lehman Brothers or

Bear Stearns in New York City, which had access to a COBRA qualified group health plan, you will get help under this bill. But mom-and-pop stores in Salt Lake City that could not afford a group health plan for their hard-working employees, they get nothing. Not a thing. Now, let me repeat again—nothing. This is not only unfair, it is unconscionable.

That is not all. It gets worse. Both the Senate- and the House-passed language gave the same COBRA subsidy—50 percent and 65 percent respectively—regardless of one's income threshold. Look at this chart. You probably recognize the fellow on the left. This is Richard Fuld, the former CEO of the now-bankrupt Lehman Brothers, who made almost half a billion dollars in salary, bonuses, and stock options since the year 2000. He is going to get the same level of subsidy for his health insurance premiums as the laid-off construction worker on the right here in Utah.

I worked with Senator GRASSLEY to write an amendment that would have applied income testing to this provision to target this taxpayer-funded help to those who needed it the most. We income test Medicare Part B for our seniors, so why not do the same for these subsidies? Unfortunately, it was not included in the Senate package.

Another concern Americans need to be mindful about is the impact of this massive COBRA subsidy on our Nation's employers, who are already struggling to meet their payroll needs.

By the way, just so everybody understands what COBRA means, if you get fired or the business ends or you have to leave the business, you have a right under COBRA to continue the insurance, but you have to pay for it rather than your employer.

Even though employers are not explicitly liable for the COBRA subsidies in this legislation, they will suffer from this phenomenon of adverse selection. A number of COBRA-eligible individuals have premiums that exceed those of active workers. Studies have shown that the average COBRA premiums are at 145 percent of active worker premium payments. According to a study by PricewaterhouseCoopers, the 10-year impact of this provision on employers, even when limited to those in the 55-to-64 age group, could be up to \$65 billion. Economics 101 dictates that these additional costs will simply be passed on to employers, which in return will result in lower wages and more layoffs. This is not exactly what would qualify as "stimulus" in my book—spending, sure, but definitely not stimulus.

Let me shift my attention to the comparative effectiveness provision. The idea behind this concept is simple: Compare the effectiveness of medical treatments and procedures so payers, providers, and patients can make smart choices. Sounds good. However, the difficulty arises when you decide to compare on the basis of what is cheap-

er rather than what works well. Both the House- and the Senate-passed versions provided \$1.1 billion for comparative effectiveness, including a \$400 million slush fund to be used by the Secretary at his or her discretion. Once again, this is a topic of bipartisan interest and concern that should have been discussed in the context of comprehensive reform.

We can all agree that a one-size-fits-all approach is the wrong approach for the American health care system. Based on our own personal experiences, we know that what works best for one does not always work the same for the other. Allowing comparative effectiveness on the basis of cost can have disastrous consequences not only on innovation of lifesaving treatments but also in the delivery of quality care.

On this chart, for example, we see Jack Tagg, a former World War II pilot, who in 2006 suffered from a severe case of macular degeneration. The regional health board that utilized cost-based comparative effectiveness rejected his request for treatment citing high cost, unless the disease hit his other eye also.

It took 3 years to overturn that decision. Now let's just all remember that a family member with cancer in an intensive care unit would probably neither have the time nor the resources to appeal such an egregious decision. We need to remember the real implications of these provisions—not simply in terms of political spin and special interests—but in terms of its impact on real people who are our mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, brother and sisters—children.

During the Finance Committee consideration of the stimulus legislation, Senators BAUCUS, ENZI, CONRAD, and I discussed the importance of getting the comparative effectiveness provision right.

I believe that comparative effectiveness must focus on clinical effectiveness, not cost, and it should maintain patient choice and innovation. Failure to do so could have disastrous consequences.

As I have already said multiple times, I am disappointed that Democrats have decided to use the stimulus legislation to address health care reform in a partisan and piecemeal manner. Health IT—information technology—is another perfect example. It is an area of consensus that should have been part of a comprehensive and bipartisan health care reform dialogue.

It is my hope that the Health Information Technology Standards Committee that is created in this legislation will take into account the work of States like Utah that already have adopted statewide HIT standards for the exchange of clinical data. Utah is much further down the road than other States in this area. Therefore, when the committee is making recommendations for HIT standards, it is my hope that the work of States like Utah will be taken into account and seriously

considered by the HIT Standards Committee members. Utah has been a national leader in this area and I believe that its work in this area should be used as a template when national HIT standards are developed.

In addition, as we incentivize physicians, hospitals and other health care providers to use electronic health records—EHR, it is important that we provide assistance for them with both the purchase and maintenance of EHR systems. I have heard from one Utah physician in Ogden who paid over \$8,000 for software only to discover that the software simply does not work. This is unacceptable. Therefore, if we are going to incentivize health providers to use electronic health records, we need to make sure that providers will have assistance in choosing, implementing and using electronic health records.

Utah has been a leader in physician EHR implementation as a result of its participation in the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services—CMS—Medicare Care Management Performance—MCMP demonstration project which was created through the Medicare Modernization Act. The demonstration provided incentive funding to Utah physicians for adopting EHRs and offered these doctors support and assistance with their EHRs systems. In the bill we are considering, I included language to ensure that health providers in Utah and across the country will continue to receive that assistance. Without such assistance, many practices will move forward with a commitment to adopt EHRs, but will not choose the right product for their needs or could have difficulty using the system.

Another concern that has been brought to my attention by Utah health care providers is that the maintenance of effort provision in this legislation only applies to eligible State and local governments and not to State and local health care providers. This is a real concern in Utah. My State, like others across the Nation, is experiencing economic difficulties and, as a result, is contemplating reducing provider payments. I am deeply concerned about the impact this provision could have not only on providers but patient access to quality health care.

Finally, I would like to briefly address the enforcement provisions contained in section 13410 of this legislation relating to the State attorneys general. When adopting rules to implement the health information technology provisions in this act, I would urge Secretary of HHS to include rules to require the States to notify the HHS Secretary as to any outside groups that will have contracts to assist with the enforcement of these provisions. I appreciate the opportunity to work with my colleagues on this important issue.

I look forward to working together to transform our sick-care system into a true health care system. However, the other side at this time seems focused

on transforming it into a socialized welfare system through this Government-spending bill. I continue to hold deep hope in my heart that we will soon move beyond these beltway games and work together to fix Main Street and make sure that our Nation continues to be the shining city on the hill.

Let me just make one other comment. When our bill went over to the House—the House bill was passed too—I happened to notice that the welfare reform program that we worked so hard on in the mid-1990s, that President Clinton vetoed twice until he finally decided that it was worthwhile and signed it, has been greatly modified in this bill. I may be wrong in this because I have not read that section, but I have had indications that that section basically has changed our welfare reform law. It basically put, within a short time thereafter, two-thirds of the people who had been on welfare to work, many of those people second and third generations on welfare. They found out that they could work and get the self-esteem that comes from being able to work, while still having a welfare system to care for those who can't care for themselves but would if they could.

My understanding is they have changed the rules now where people can stay on welfare their whole lifetime. I hope that has been changed. I have not looked at this final version, but I hope that has been changed. If not, let me make a prediction. For most all of my time in the Senate, the percentage of GDP that our Federal Government has required is somewhere between 18 and 20 percent. If this bill goes through and there is another \$2 or \$3 trillion in spending, without being done right, we are talking about Europeanizing America. We are talking about the percentage of GDP going up as high as 39 percent—according to the economists I talked to. That would be disastrous.

Some are so crude that they suggest that is the plan of our more liberal friends on the other side because the more they get people dependent on the Federal Government, the more they think the Democratic Party is the only one that is going to take care of them.

We prefer a little different approach to it. We prefer to help those who can't take care of themselves but would if they could, to help them in every way we possibly can. We have difficulty—at least I do—helping those who can help themselves but will not.

I hope that provision is no longer in this bill, but I strongly suspect it is. If that is so, we will have done the American economy tremendous harm.

I am concerned about this. I can't vote for this bill, but I would have liked to have voted for a really good bill that really provided appropriate tax relief and made it possible to expand jobs in such a way as to bring this economy back to the greatest economy in the world, bar none, without ques-

tion, and without question of its future greatness.

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

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

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I wanted to spend a few minutes this evening talking about what we think, what we think—I am going to emphasize that—because nobody has seen the bill that I understand we are supposed to vote on tomorrow morning, that spends almost \$700 plus billion. We have not seen the bill. We have not seen the report language. And I can assure you that this Senator is not about to vote on this bill until he has read the bill and we will do due diligence to do that, if we ever get a copy of the bill.

But I wanted to talk about a couple of things that are important that we think are in the bill, and it has to do with health care. I have a little bit of experience in that. I have practiced medicine now for 28, 29 years. I find parts of this bill that I know when it is explained to the American public, they will agree with me, it is ludicrous.

Let me tell you the first part of the bill. There is \$20 billion in this bill to pay hospitals and doctors to buy health IT. Now, at the beginning you would say, well, what is wrong with that? We want electronic medical records. We want to see the benefits that come from the economy of scale, the increased productivity that comes from IT to help us in health care.

Where this bill does not understand what is happening out there is doctors will buy health IT, and hospitals will improve—they all have health IT right now, by the way—will improve their health IT once there is a program out there that is interoperable with the rest of the program. The reason doctors are not buying programs for electronic medical records has nothing to do with a lack of money, it is this very simple reason: They know if they buy it now they get to buy it again, because none of the computers in health IT talk to each other. They will not talk.

The way to make them talk is called an interoperable standard. And a good example for you to compare, think about where we had ATMs. How did we make an ATM, where you can go anywhere in the country if you have a credit card that allows you to get cash and go into any ATM in this country and get cash. How did we do that? How did ATMs come about? They came about because the private sector, the banking industry, created an interoperable standard first. Because they had the interoperability standard, where every bank could make sure that they could talk to every other bank, they put in ATMs.

All of a sudden, voila, anywhere in the world today, if you have money in the bank and you have an ATM card, you can get money out of the bank. They did not build the ATMs first, they did not have the Government buy the ATMs before they had the standard set.

People say, well, we have taken care of that in this bill. We are going to have the Government decide what the interoperable standard is. Well, the Government has been working for 6 years to develop an interoperability standard. They are at least doing it through a private consortium now, and 80 percent of that standard has been accomplished. It will be completed in 2011. But it will not be completed the way this bill is written, because we are going to pull it all back from this public-private consortium and we are going to have some bureaucrats at HHS decide what the standard is going to be.

There are a lot of problems with that. One is nobody at HHS knows that information. No. 2 is, everything that is out there in the market today is now put at risk, so you are going to absolutely stop private investment in this area that is so much needed.

So what we are going to do is we are going to allow bureaucrats to decide what is it going to be. We are going to eliminate companies that have great ideas, because they are not going to be in the mix, and we are going to accept a standard that is not going to be the best standard.

The way HHS has it set up now with a public-private consortium was a poor way to do it, but at least it has got it 80 percent of the way there. We are going to backtrack on it. Just so you know, we are so good at spending money. We have spent \$780 million already of your money trying to get this, that we are going to now throw down the toilet so we can start over and have bureaucrats exactly decide what the standard is going to be.

Well, I will predict to you, everything else we do in IT in the Federal Government, 50 percent of the money we waste. That is what our studies show. We waste \$32 billion a year on IT programs that never work, out of a \$64 billion budget for IT programs alone. So we are going to waste a ton of money.

But that is not the important thing in this bill. We are going to give every doctor in the country, no matter how much money they make, if they do not have electronic medical records, we are going to give them \$60,000 to buy an electronic medical record.

Now, it would seem to me that with the incomes of the average physician being over \$200,000, the last place we want to give \$60,000 to buy a piece of software that is not going to work, that is going to have to be replaced anyway, is to those who are in the upper income in this country.

But that is probably not as important as we are going to give for-profit hospitals and the profitable non-profit

hospitals \$11 million each to buy electronic medical record software that still will not talk to the doctors who bought it and we gave \$60,000.

The total cost of this, and what we are doing, is going to be in excess, by the time all of the problems are solved and all of the defects are figured out, and all of the wasted money, of \$100 billion. This bill is going to waste \$100 billion.

Now, tell me for a minute why we would give some of the most profitable companies in the country, the for-profit hospitals and the not-for-profit hospitals who last year made in excess of \$6 billion—that is the not-for-profit hospitals made in excess of \$6 billion besides doing the charity care that they did—why are we going to give them \$11 million each to accomplish something that cannot be accomplished?

I will tell you why we are going to do it. Because some Congressman or some Senator said the way you solve this problem is to throw money at it. They haven't thought it through. There has been no development on or recognition of what is needed, which is an interoperable standard. What should we have done? Seven years ago when we started down this process, there were three great programs out there: one at Mayo—I am talking big programs—one at Cleveland Clinic, and one at Kaiser Permanente. What should we have done? We should have bought all three of those, created the ability for those three programs to talk to each other and given it away. We would have spent about \$20 or \$30 million, maybe \$100 million, maybe \$200 million, but not \$100 billion. So again, Washington has messed it up. The very thing we are hoping to fix we are going to ruin. As we do it, we are going to waste \$100 billion, and \$30 billion of that total is in this bill.

The other interesting thing is none of this money starts rolling out until the middle of next year.

I am told I have 1 minute remaining. I ask unanimous consent for 2 additional minutes.

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

Mr. COBURN. That is one of the problems with this bill.

Let's talk about the big problem. As a practicing physician, I know what physicians are taught. First, do no harm. Second, listen to your patient, and they will tell you what is wrong with them. Third, if it has already been done, don't do it again. That is what they are taught. With that comes years of experience, clinical judgment, and in-depth knowledge about people and their disease. In this bill is a statement that says: We are going to develop, through a large slush fund at Health and Human Services, a model called comparative effectiveness. There is nothing wrong with comparing effective outcomes. There is nothing wrong with trying to use clinical data to move us in a better direction. But that

is not what this is about. This is comparative effectiveness to control cost.

I warn the American people tonight, if this bill goes through, we are well on the way to absolute government control of the patient-doctor relationship, because we are going to assume that there is no way that a doctor can make a better decision than a computer. I will give two examples that happened in the last 5 years in my practice, two people who came in who had no clinical signs, had no indications other than my knowing them for years and developing a suspicion that something was wrong. They didn't come with a complaint. Their complaint was something else. I ordered MRIs on both patients. They were both denied by their insurance company. I arranged for both of them to get MRIs. Both had deadly brain tumors. They never would have fit in the comparative effectiveness or the cost control mechanism that we are setting up with this so we can control Medicare costs. This is the first step for the government to start rationing the very care it says it wants to give to the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. COBURN. I ask unanimous consent for 1 additional minute.

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

Mr. COBURN. The American people better pay very close attention to this bill. If you are on Medicare today or if you are 55 years of age, you better be plenty afraid of the language in this bill, because it is setting up the basis with which the Government will decide what kind of care you get. We are going to use a chart. If you don't fit in the chart, you are out of luck. You are going to lose the ability for clinical skills to make a difference in your life. Talk to the people of Great Britain where cancer cure rates are lower than ours because they don't have access to treatments Americans have today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). The Senator from New Mexico.

(The remarks of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico pertaining to the introduction of S. 433 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the economic stimulus plan, and I rise in dismay. I am dismayed because we are about to spend \$786 billion—or whatever the latest figure is that keeps changing almost by the hour—one of the most expensive bills this or any other Congress has ever seen that will not truly stimulate anything. I am also dismayed that in doing so we are placing an almost insurmountable fiscal yoke across the next generation's shoulders.

Yesterday, I became the proud grandfather of two twin granddaughters. It saddens me to know the result of the

votes we cast, I assume, tomorrow—and the ultimate cost of this bill—is going to be borne by those two little girls in their lifetimes and not by my generation in ours. We are saddling this next generation of our children and grandchildren with an unbelievable debt for the purpose of trying to stimulate the economy when, in fact, there is virtually nothing in this bill that truly is going to stimulate the economy in the current crisis we are in.

Georgians and Americans are struggling. They need jobs. They need food on the table. They need to be able to go to bed at night knowing, at the very least, they have the blessing of a roof over their heads.

But provisions in the bill that could have truly helped Americans, such as a \$500-per-worker tax credit, have been so watered down that now the experts say that particular provision is going to provide about \$13 more per week in workers' pockets. That is not a stimulus plan.

I commend my good friend and my colleague, Senator ISAKSON from Georgia, who worked to put an idea in this bill, a housing tax credit that we know would have stimulated the economy and revived the plummeting housing market.

Now, why are we in this economic crisis we are in today? If you ask any economist to point to one thing that has put us in this crisis, every single one of them—Republican and Democratic economists, conservative and liberal economists, Independent economists—every one of them will tell you the housing crisis is the No. 1 issue that put us into this crisis.

Unfortunately, the bill that came out of the House, the bill that originally came out of the Finance Committee in the Senate, contained not one single provision, in either bill, that was focused on addressing this issue of the housing crisis.

Under Senator ISAKSON's proposal that was an amendment to the bill on the floor of the Senate, a \$15,000 home buyer tax credit would have been given to anyone who purchased a home during the next year. That would have had a very positive effect on the economy. How do we know that? We know that because Congress passed a similar housing tax credit in 1975, when we were in the midst of another declining housing industry situation in a crisis that was not as severe as this one but still in a crisis. What we found then was that particular provision turned around America's sagging economic fortunes.

I know families across the country were waiting for this tax credit to pass. I have heard from Georgians over and over again, over the last several weeks, who are looking for a new home to buy, but they, frankly, have been waiting on the proposal because they have been reading about it.

I got a call from a radio talk show host in my home State today who made the statement to me, before we

started the interview: Tell me about Senator ISAKSON's tax credit provision. Where does it stand because I am looking for a home to buy and my realtor called me and said: Look, you can afford to pay a little bit more because here is what is going to be the result of your buying this house: a \$15,000 tax credit.

Now, with the way this provision has been watered down, it may as well not even be in there. It is unfortunate. This was a bipartisan amendment, an amendment that was talked about on both sides of the aisle by Senators in this Chamber, and was agreed to without even calling for a vote because everybody recognizes the housing sector has to be fixed and that this would play a major role in fixing that sector.

All week we have read in the papers and heard from a majority of our colleagues that this bill is a compromise. Well, let me say this: This bill is no compromise. When deals of this magnitude are struck in closed-door, back-room sessions, when the White House talks to this side of the aisle but does not truly listen, you do not have a compromise.

It is pretty clear the White House has not listened to this side of the aisle in crafting this final proposal that apparently is in the process of being agreed to. My Republican colleagues have offered proposal after proposal to create jobs, to fix the real crux of our economic troubles—the housing crisis—and to lend a hand to laid-off workers who are suffering through no fault of their own. Instead, we are spending money we do not have on projects or programs that are not needed.

What taxpayers are getting instead is a bloated Government giveaway packed with pet projects. Let me say there has been a lot of conversation coming from the White House, as well as on the floor of the Senate, that this bill does not contain earmarks. Well, anybody who says that simply has not read the bill. This bill is packed with as many earmarks as I have seen in any bill that has come into this body in the time I have been here. There is earmark after earmark in here, and we are going to talk some more about that before this bill is voted on, presumably tomorrow.

The American people know something needs to be done, and I agree that it does. But this legislation is not what is needed to address the housing crisis, put hard-earned dollars back in our citizens' pockets to spend as they wish, and put Americans back to work.

Our side of the aisle offered a very targeted combination of spending and tax reductions in the McCain amendment. A truly bipartisan effort by the majority and the Senate as a whole would have passed that amendment, and we could be headed down the road of reaching a bipartisan agreement on the issue of trying to solve this economic crisis. Unfortunately, that amendment was not agreed to because it was not voted on in a bipartisan way.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Georgia for his excellent comments about the housing proposal offered by our colleague, Senator ISAKSON. I thought it was a good idea when he first brought it up. It would have pleased me if that had been included at the time President Bush sent out those checks a year ago that had no real permanent benefit, and I thought it should have been included then. I was very much supportive of it when he brought it forward later, last week, and I thought we had adopted it. But it looks like it is going to be taken out or so reduced it will not have the same effect.

The advantage of that was it would target the real problem we have; which is the housing supply that is growing. The growing supply of unoccupied housing causes the price of everyone's home to decline. We know it had to decline some because we had a bubble in housing. But there is a danger when home prices fall below what the real market value is. When they fall too low, it does begin to have serious ramifications in the economy.

Similar to Senator CHAMBLISS, I thought Senator MCCAIN's proposal had some real infrastructure spending, some targeted tax reductions that would put money in people's pockets immediately but would not necessarily be permanent, and we could shut that off without creating a bureaucracy. I thought that was a real good piece of legislation. It cost about half the cost of this legislation.

So there are some things we could do. I was certainly prepared to consider other options and other alternatives. But, as it is, there has been very little input into this bill. Right now, we still have not seen it. There was talk about trying to vote on it tonight. That is unthinkable: to have a 700-plus page piece of legislation, spending almost \$800 billion, and people who have not read it are going to vote on it? Surely, that will not happen. It is not a good process, in my view.

I am disturbed about it, and I think the financial soul of our country is at stake. If this becomes a pattern, if this becomes the way we do business and the way we spend money and throw money around, it seems to me, too much in a political way, rather than in a stimulative way, we will say to our constituents and to the world: The United States does not have its house in order, it is not a safe place to put money, and there is no certainty about what will happen next because unpredictable Government actions may dwarf the natural economic forces that people relied on in the past to make their investments. So I am worried about that.

I would share something here. When you get the Government spending a large amount of money, it creates a lot

of problems. Our economy has always been less dominated by Government spending than the European economies, at least Germany and France in particular. They have had Government spending that represents as much as 45 or 50 percent of their gross domestic product. It is a huge portion of their economy. Their unemployment rate has always tended to be higher than ours, and their growth has not kept up with ours.

One other thing happens when the Government injects itself into the economy; and that is, it has a tendency to corrupt the Government itself. We have had a lot of criticisms about lobbyists, that we have too many lobbyists. Lobbyists have too much influence, and we should have fewer lobbyists and they should have less influence. But as the size and power of the Government expands, I think it is only natural that one would expect companies worth billions of dollars would feel a necessity to have more lobbyists. This is a Washington Times piece not long ago dealing with the \$700 billion Wall Street bailout, and it shows some of the things that were happening. During the fourth quarter, Citigroup had \$1.28 billion in lobbyist expenses. In the third quarter, they had \$1.39 billion in lobbyist expenses. People say, well, that is unbelievable. That is a lot of money. There are 1,000 million dollars in a billion. That is how many 1 billion is, 1,000 million. During that time, Citigroup gets \$45 billion from the U.S. Government. So what is that? Forty-five billion is forty-five thousand million. So it is probably a pretty good idea, from the company's point of view, to spend \$1 million on lobbyists. That is a pretty good bargain. That is all I am saying. The bigger the Government, the more the Government gets interfaced with what has historically been a private sector that we didn't stick our nose in. Historically, the companies paid taxes, they obeyed the law, and the Government didn't subsidize winners and losers in the banking industry.

So AIG, they actually got, I think now, over \$100 billion. They spent \$390,000 in fourth quarter expenses. General Motors, look at that: \$3,320,000. They got money out of this Wall Street financial bailout that nobody ever thought they could get. They got the Government to give them \$10 billion. So I guess they consider \$3 million in lobbying expenses to be a pretty good bargain. Those are some of the dangers when we stick our nose into matters that we out not to meddle in.

Once again, I wish to share this chart because I think it is instructive of the situation in which we find ourselves. Back in 2004, President Bush had the biggest deficit up to that time since World War II—maybe ever, in terms of real dollars. It was \$413 billion. That is when he was criticized so aggressively, as many of my colleagues will remember, for reckless spending and running up the deficit. I thought a lot of that

criticism was valid, but we had a war going on and we had some other things. We didn't contain spending as well as we should have. The recession that occurred was biting into revenue, and we ended up with a \$413 billion deficit, the biggest we had ever had. It dropped in 2005 to \$318 billion, it dropped to \$248 billion in 2006, and in 2007 the deficit dropped to \$161 billion. It was definitely heading in the right direction. That represented only 1.2 percent of GDP. This 3.6 percent of GDP for the deficit was the highest in about 30 years, since the recession in 1980, as I recall.

So what about 2008, the last fiscal year, ending September 30 of 2008. We sent out the \$150 billion in checks to Americans in the hope that it would do something good for the economy. People blamed the President for it. I think he deserves blame for it because it didn't work. However, the President has no authority whatsoever to spend a dime that Congress doesn't give him. He had to come to Congress and ask for that money. The Democratic leadership supported it and moved the bill forward, and we sent out the checks. That, plus the economic slowdown, caused the 2008 deficit. Last September 30, it was \$455 billion, the largest ever.

What about this year? Our own Congressional Budget Office has done some analysis. And I would just say that the CBO is a nonpartisan group. We just elected a new Director. He was basically selected by the Democratic majority. The Republican members of the Budget Committee liked him. We thought he was an honest, capable man, and we voted for him. So we got a new Director. He is, I believe, an honorable person, gives us good numbers, as the previous Director did. So the CBO estimates, without the stimulus, the deficit ending September 30 of this year will be \$1.3 trillion. That will represent 8.3 percent of GDP, the highest ever.

Now we are about to pass another almost \$800 billion stimulus package on top of that. It all would not get spent in 2009. It is not all going to get spent before September 30 of this year, so of that 800 they are scoring about 232 to be spent in this year, meaning the total deficit would be \$1.4 trillion, three times—three times—the size of the highest deficit we have ever had in history.

I have to tell my colleagues, Gary Becker, the Nobel Prize-winning economist, and another one of his associates, just wrote an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal. He questioned this stimulus package. He used careful language. He said normally in a stimulus package, for every dollar you expend, you hope to get a dollar and a half of growth. He said in their opinion, because of the nature of this legislation—I will say the political nature of it rather than the stimulus nature of it—they conclude each dollar spent will produce less than a dollar of stimulus.

So we are adding another \$800 billion on to our debt total for very little ben-

efit. When you go to next year, they are expecting it to be another \$1 trillion deficit and the year after that, \$640 billion. By the way, these 2 years at least have \$70 billion more which will be added because we are going to fix the AMT, the alternative minimum tax. It costs \$70 billion to fix it, and we do it every year, and that is never scored until we fix it. So that will be added on to both of those. Also, physicians are set to get a 20-percent reduction next year in their physician payments. Why do we do that? Well, we passed a law a long time ago that would call for that. We have long since recognized we can't cut our doctors' pay that way, we can't cut them 20 percent. Every year, we put the money back in. It is about \$30 billion, I believe, a year. That doesn't score in these numbers. So you can assume the deficit next year will be at least about \$100 billion higher than current estimates. Those are gimmicks we use to hide the real nature of the deficit.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, interest in the stimulus bill alone over the next 10 years will amount to \$326 billion, and that includes the first 2 years when all is not yet spent. It will actually be about \$40 billion a year thereafter once it all gets spent. That is a huge thing. That is \$400 billion every decade. Who is going to pay it? Our children and grandchildren. There is no plan to pay this off. So this is not a minor matter.

Finally, our own Congressional Budget Office, after studying this package, concluded these things: It would have a temporary stimulus effect in the first 2 to 3 years, but over a 10-year period, they conclude the gross domestic product would grow less if the legislation were enacted than if we didn't pass anything. They project that over a 10-year period it would hurt the economy—not a lot, but it would be down. Why? Because when we borrow \$1 trillion from the private economy to pay this debt, it crowds out private people who may want to borrow money and create jobs.

Secondly, you have to pay the interest on it every year; we have to pay \$40 billion a year in interest. How much is \$40 billion? That is the amount of the entire Federal highway budget each year, \$40 billion—a lot of money. Now we are going to add that every year, just in interest, which we will be paying indefinitely. Some people have said—even some conservatives have said deficits don't matter. Wrong. Deficits do matter.

Finally, I would just point out these facts about why the bill is not effective to do what it says it wants to do, which is to create jobs. It is simple arithmetic. We wrote this chart when the bill was \$826 billion. It actually came out of the Senate at \$838 billion. We are hearing it is going to come out less than that, and that we will end up with about \$789 billion. So we don't know. Apparently, they are still arguing over what to spend and how to spend the

money. The interest on that version, according to CBO, would run \$347 billion, give or take a billion or two, over the next decade.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. I ask unanimous consent for 2 additional minutes.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. So that totals over \$1.1 trillion. You divide that out per taxpayer, per person who pays taxes—don't think that something can be created for nothing. To inject \$800 billion into the economy today, we have to borrow it. How much does that mean that the average American is assuming as new debt? Well, what we conclude is—just from simple arithmetic—it is about \$8,400 per taxpayer. Think about that. Just like that, we are going to pass a bill that over 10 years will cost over \$1.1 trillion and increase the average taxpayer's share of the debt by about \$8,400. It is like adding it to your mortgage or something.

If it produces 3.9 million jobs, which is the high end of what the Congressional Budget Office says it would create—the goal for those pushing the legislation say they want to create 4 million jobs. That is the high side of what—it is higher, actually, than what CBO, our own budget office, tells us it will create. So 3.9 million jobs, that costs \$300,000 per job. Do the arithmetic.

Is that a good deal for America? Is that worth burdening us with \$8,400 each? What if it came out on the low side? What if it only created 1.3 million jobs, which was the low side that CBO scored—1.3 to 3.9? That would be \$900,000 per job.

Mr. President, I would say that, yes, we can do some things to improve this economy, but we are moving a political agenda; we are moving programmatic ideas. A lot of people might like to see some of these things become law, but they don't want to go through the entire budget process, to compete and debate. They just stick these programs into this emergency stimulus bill that goes straight to the debt, none of which is paid for, and then it is all debt. I don't think it is a good idea.

Good people might disagree, but I firmly believe it is not a good idea for my constituents. My phones are ringing off the hook against it. I don't believe it is good for my children, my grandchildren, or yours.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I understand we are in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, what we are debating in the Senate is about

fighting for the economic future of America.

Dr. King talked about the "fierce urgency of now" in the context of a struggle for civil rights. We have to remember the fierce urgency of now when we are tackling the worst economic crisis our country has seen in generations.

We have to understand the urgency for the 3.6 million Americans who have lost their job since December 2007—almost 600,000 in the last month alone. It is an urgent situation when millions of American families are in danger of losing their homes. It is a dire situation when State budgets are stretched so thin they have to watch school buildings crumble. It is an emergency situation when local communities are forced to consider cutting police or firefighters who protect their residents. It is an immediate crisis when a young girl needs an operation but her parents cannot afford health insurance. The Dow lost 40 percent in a year's time. Businesses are closing. Life savings are being drained.

Even for the hard-working Americans who still have their jobs, pensions, and health care, there is still a lot of fear out there that their careers and health insurance aren't secure; that the job loss or foreclosure that hit their neighbor might knock on their door next. Yet in the midst of all of that, I hear so many of my colleagues basically saying: Oh, no, do nothing.

Without bold and decisive action, the country faces the possibility of a prolonged economic collapse rivaling the worst we have ever seen.

In a crisis this severe, the Federal Government has the responsibility to step in and to stabilize the economy and lay the groundwork for recovery. We are not just talking about the financial recovery of individuals; we are talking about the renewal of a nation.

We have before us a tremendous opportunity to strengthen the 21st-century economy, to make investments so the private sector can create the innovations that will help our country prosper in the future, to transition away from fossil fuels and stop sending our money abroad, enhance America's energy security and meet the climate crisis that threatens our planet.

We have an opportunity very soon to vote on a bold plan to create and maintain more than 3.5 million jobs in America and 100,000 in my home State of New Jersey, helping workers damaged by this crisis and laying the foundations for economic growth well into the future.

Is the bill we are considering perfect? No. But in my many years of legislating, I have never seen a perfect bill. People are losing their jobs, their homes, and their life savings. The unemployment rate in New Jersey is the highest it has been in a decade and a half. More Americans are filing first-time jobless claims than any time in a quarter of a century. This isn't a time for delay, and it isn't a time for games

or political posturing. It is time for quick, bold action. This is a complicated piece of legislation, so I will take a little time to lay out its most important provisions.

First, this bill brings tax relief to the middle class—about \$230 billion worth of tax cuts. In the Finance Committee, I introduced an amendment to save over 1 million New Jerseyans from the alternative minimum tax, saving families up to \$5,600.

That AMT tax was originally designed to ensure that the wealthiest Americans could not use creative accounting to avoid all taxes, but it was never intended to hit the middle class as hard as it is hitting them now. If we don't act, millions of taxpayers could wake up next tax season to realize they owe more in taxes even though their income hasn't changed.

The cornerstone of this legislation, in terms of tax relief, is a making work pay credit—the credit that is available to those who are working. The average working family—95 percent of all working families—are going to get a tax cut of up to \$800 to put money back into their pockets to support their families and, at the same time, create demand for goods and services in this economy that will be provided largely by the private sector that creates other jobs for those who provide those goods and service.

It expands the earned-income and child tax credit to help low-income working families get through these difficult times. Those are the individuals who need money, and when they have it, they spend it in an economy that also creates demand for goods and services, created largely by the private sector. In fact, 90 percent of all of the jobs created under this bill will be from the private sector. It supports tax incentives for businesses to make new investments and hire new employees.

This recovery package would not just create jobs; it will create a new generation of green jobs. What we are considering today is a green recovery package, which will help change the direction of our economy for one based on fossil fuels to one based on clean renewable energy. It makes important investments in building efficiency, renewable fuels, clean vehicles, and green job training. It makes a massive investment in weatherizing homes, which will reduce emissions while bringing down energy costs. All along the way, each of those initiatives creates a different sector of the job marketplace that Americans will be able to fulfill.

Just like the rest of it, the energy piece of this legislation isn't perfect. I would have liked to have seen more support for mass transit. They are facing major budget crises and have to consider service cutbacks, just as ridership is growing and climate change is accelerating. Transit funding is essential if we are going to meet our emissions goals, get cars off the streets, and keep efficient transportation affordable.

The Federal Government has been dragging its feet on energy security and climate change for too long. Our local governments have been leading the way. That is why I am proud to have created the energy efficiency and conservation block grant in 2007, along with Senator SANDERS, to help fund and reward them for that work. I am thrilled this Economic Recovery Act contains substantial funding for these grants, including tens of millions of dollars for New Jersey. Cities and communities across the country can use the funding to promote efficiency, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and invest in renewable energy and the jobs that will go along with that in doing that work.

A municipality could work to insulate office buildings, install fluorescent light bulbs, install solar panels, invest in LED lighting for traffic signals or purchase more efficient municipal vehicles. Of course, what a municipality would do for energy efficiency in New Jersey would be different from what one might do in Alaska or Arizona. So the funding allows for flexibility.

There is strong support for solar energy, including a manufacturing tax credit and tax incentives for homeowners to install solar panels. That is good news for New Jersey, which is the second-biggest solar-producing State in the country and where the solar cell was invented.

The support for energy efficiency is complemented by important investments in infrastructure. With this recovery plan, we can start building and rehabilitating scores of roads, bridges, and bypasses.

We have the chance to secure a stream of funding to start construction on the ARC rail tunnel, to ease commutes across the Hudson, reduce traffic, and clean our air. Most important, those kinds of projects put people to work. Not only the construction people but the engineers and architects, the clerical workers in their office, and everybody who creates supplies for these jobs at their places of work, and the transportation that brings it to the job site. This is how we create all of these jobs, and they're mostly in the private sector.

We understand a major part of helping the economic recovery is allowing workers who have lost their jobs to keep their families afloat, develop the skills necessary to maintain long-term employment and find new jobs.

This economic recovery package makes exactly this type of bold investment. It helps States close gaps in their unemployment programs. It rewards States for innovative reforms, providing benefits to more than 500,000 workers a year who are now falling through the cracks of the unemployment program. It stimulates the broader economy as every dollar put into the hands of temporarily displaced workers and their families generates \$1.64 in economic growth, whether it is spent on housing, groceries, or other basic necessities.

For those who have fallen on the hardest of times—who have been laid off and haven't been able to find work and are having trouble putting food on the table or keeping a roof overhead—the recovery package includes important support for food assistance, as well as housing programs that will help prevent foreclosures, rehabilitate homes, and provide emergency housing in New Jersey.

This legislation that we are talking about is not only recovery but investment. This legislation also means about \$4 billion for worker training and employment services. The labor market has fundamentally changed. If we are going to stay competitive in our State and country, we need to invest in human capital and give our workers the skills to thrive in the 21st-century economy.

Preparing those students and workers and those who will prepare them for the high-tech, high-paying jobs means investing in education at every level. That is also not only going to lay the foundation for long-term economic growth but give immediate opportunities for jobs as well. These are ways in which we, in fact, can modernize our schools. At least 205 New Jersey schools will have the opportunity to modernize themselves with the technology necessary and the laboratory necessary for preparation for this 21st-century economy. It is an investment that could mean the difference between a crumbling schoolroom and a science lab that prepares a child for a career in biomedical engineering.

I was raised in a tenement, poor, the son of immigrants, the first in my family to go to college. I know I would not be standing in the Senate today if it weren't for the Federal Government's support and those opportunities. Whether it is our public education program or in college through the Pell grants and the opportunities in the American opportunity tax credit to make college more affordable, it will produce a workforce that can compete anywhere in the world and be able to capture the new jobs created under this bill.

Any parent in America knows the challenges of affording health care, even if you haven't lost your job. Families working in low-wage or even moderate-wage jobs struggle every month just to pay the bills, not to mention the medical bills on top of that. Those who have recently lost jobs are pretty much out of luck. Unfortunately, a child's illness doesn't always wait for a good-paying job with health care to come along.

That is why we have included provisions in this bill to help States continue to provide health coverage to those children and families they are serving. For those who lose their jobs and their health insurance with it, we have included a tax break to help them pay for the COBRA coverage they are eligible for in between jobs.

I will end where this whole crisis began, in housing. This bill includes

provisions that will allow more families to get tax relief when they buy a home, provide additional funding for those who recently lost their home, and provide additional funding for a provision I authored to help children affected by a home foreclosure stay in school.

This plan may be detailed; the investments it makes may be diverse. But we are not talking about just throwing money haphazardly. We understand every dollar in the plan belongs to the American taxpayer. They deserve assurances that their money is invested wisely. So we are going to ensure unprecedented transparency, oversight, and accountability to the plan so Americans can see not only how their money is being spent, but also the results of their investments.

This includes requiring the President to report quarterly on the plan's progress, as well as establishing an oversight panel to review the management of taxpayer dollars.

We have had a vigorous debate in the legislation. That is part of our democracy and it is always welcome. It has been troubling to me to see such a bad case of amnesia in some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I think it would make every American who loss his or her job in this recession cringe to hear that some of my Republican colleagues want to repeat the policies that helped create this crisis in the first place.

Republican policies dominated the last Presidency over the last 8 years and dominated Congress for a good part of that period of time. All of a sudden, they are guardians of fiscal responsibility, after taxing the middle class while passing capital gains and dividend tax cuts aimed at the wealthy, after turning President Clinton's record surpluses into President Bush's record deficits and doubling the national debt to more than \$11 trillion—\$11 trillion. If we did absolutely nothing, if President Obama did absolutely nothing, he will have inherited a \$1.2 trillion debt. I hear these voices now of fiscal responsibility. Where were they when they were driving this enormous deficit to the Nation?

Now, to top it all off, they added amendment after amendment that added to the debt, and then they turned around, after adding to the debt and complaining about it, and voted against the package because they said it adds too much to the Federal debt. Only in Washington can one believe that.

Finally, I hope our Republican colleagues are not of the belief that by hoping this package does not succeed they will achieve political victory because, in essence, they would be voting and betting against an American economic recovery, against the American people's hopes and dreams and aspirations to live a better life.

I fear, after reading some of the articles today, that is exactly where they are: no plan to meet the economic challenges we have, complain about the

plan that is there, and then ultimately find ourselves in a set of circumstances in which they are betting against the American people and this economic recovery. That is not only bad politics, it is bad policy for the Nation. I hope they will see the light when it comes time to vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho is recognized.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, first, let me say to my distinguished colleague from New Jersey, I sincerely appreciate his passion about this problem. I think everyone on this side of the aisle likewise feels as passionately about the difficulties facing the American people today. There is no one who believes this is not a problem. There is no one here who does not feel the empathy every one of us should feel about Americans who are losing their jobs and about Americans who are underemployed.

There are over 92 percent of Americans employed, but there are over 7 percent who are not. The fact that 92 percent are employed in no way denigrates the fact that we have a substantial and a high rate of unemployment.

With all due respect to my colleague from New Jersey, he made reference to the fact that there are people encouraging that we do nothing. I don't know who that person is. I have not run into them yet. It is not anyone on this floor that I know of.

I think this problem is so serious and I believe my Republican colleagues believe this problem is so serious that it does not only deserve something to be done but that something major be done, something aggressive be done, and something quickly be done.

With all due respect, I strongly disagree with his characterization that there is anyone on this side of the aisle who hopes this plan does not succeed. We pray every day that this package does succeed. It has to succeed. If it does not, this country is going to be in very serious trouble.

Let there be no mistake about it, this is clearly a Democratic plan. The people who are saying this is a bipartisan plan are flat wrong. This is a Democratic plan. I hope it works. I pray that it works. I pray that we will be able to come out here one day in the very near future and say congratulations to the Democrats for putting together this package and putting it to work so that we turn this economy around. The Democrats own this plan.

Having said that, I urge, and my colleagues on this side of the aisle urge, that this is not just a single path that is going to take us out of the problem we have. Indeed, it is going to take more than just spending. Just spending has not worked in the past. It did not work at the time of the Great Depression. It did not work for Japan in the nineties. It did not even work for us last year when this Congress gave \$600 to every individual to go out and spend. It did not even put a blip on the

screen as far as helping the downturn in the economy.

The real problem, the systemic problem is the frozen credit markets. It is not Government spending that is going to get us out of this situation; it is the spending by the great American people, by the great American consumer, by businesses large and businesses small. It is their spending that will get us out of the deep hole we are in.

With all due respect to my good friend from New Jersey, I would like to see as much passion about attacking the problem with the banking sector and the frozen credit markets that we are seeing for this spending of \$800 billion which, when all is said and done, will turn out to be \$1.2 trillion when we include the interest that is going to have to be paid.

I congratulate the good Senator for referring to the work done in the housing sector. With all due respect, I urge it is not enough. This Senate added an excellent provision to this particular package. It was taken out when the conference committee met, and that portion that was taken out reduced in half what needed to be done to help stimulate the housing sector.

Mr. President, you heard my distinguished colleague from New Jersey talk about the amount people will be able to use to go out and get a home. It was reduced in the conference committee. It was cut virtually in half. On top of that, it only allows for first-time buyers, which just does not make sense. If we are trying to stimulate the housing sector, why just first-time house buyers? Everyone should be given this opportunity to go out and to purchase a new home or a previously occupied home and should get the credit.

With all due respect, what this Senate did was taken out in the conference committee. I would like to see the same passion as the other two paths—that is, attacking the frozen credit market and the housing sector—that we keep seeing from the other side as far as the spending of this \$800 billion.

I close with this. I asked this on the floor the other day: Why \$800 billion? It is really important that history knows why America settled on \$800 billion. There is no doubt this is going to pass. The Democrats will vote together on this. Three Republicans have shown they are going to vote with them. And there is no doubt this is going to pass. But we need, America needs, America requires an explanation of why \$800 billion.

I heard the President of the United States say earlier this week: That is not just a number I pulled out of the air. I take him at his word. If it was not just pulled out of the air, it was carefully constructed with a formula. I want to see that formula. America wants to see that formula. Historians are going to need to see that formula because if it works, we are going to need that formula in the future again someday. If it does not work, we need

to look at that formula and see if we can figure out why it did not work.

Somebody, please, deliver us that formula so we know how the number of \$800 billion was reached. It could be \$50 billion. It could be \$200 billion. It could be \$600 billion. It could be \$1.5 trillion. We don't know. But if we have that formula, we Republicans can help fine-tune that formula to either spend more if more needs to be spent based on the formula or to spend less if less can be spent and if we can save this money. We are strapping our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren with a horrendous debt. They are going to be paying this back. The money will have to be borrowed probably from China. They are the ones who usually put up the money for this. Future generations are going to be working to pay back the Chinese Government \$800 billion. Future generations have the absolute right to know how this administration and how the Democratic Party constructed a formula that spent \$800 billion. It is only fair.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have been listening to the criticisms of the recovery and reinvestment plan from the other side of the aisle, and I have tried to put them into categories so I can address them and consider them. The first complaint appears to be that this is an \$800 billion stimulus package which will add to our deficit.

There is no question about the premise. The facts are right. It is \$800 billion, and it will add to our deficit. But I find it interesting that the Republicans who are criticizing this come from the same party which, over the last 8 years, saw America's national debt double from \$5 trillion to \$10 trillion and they went along with all of it. When the President wanted a war and did not want to pay for it, which added to the debt of the country, they voted for it. The final cost was about \$800 billion, and it is still accumulating. When the President wanted tax cuts in the midst of a weak economy, which added to the deficit—and cuts that went primarily to the wealthiest people—his Republican Party supported him and no questions asked.

In fact, the argument for many years was that deficits don't matter, when President Bush was in the White House, during that 8-year period of time. Now deficits do matter. It is an accumulated debt of America. It has a lot of negative impact on our economy. But for a party which ignored this reality for so many years to come and tell us now, in the midst of the worst economic crisis in modern times, that

we have to be so careful of the deficit we cannot address this economic crisis, is a little hard to take. That is the first point.

The second point is they criticize this package for costing too much, when in fact on two separate occasions Republican Senators offered amendments to this package which added to the costs dramatically. In the Senate Finance Committee, the Republican Senator from Iowa offered an amendment that added \$70 billion in cost to this package. It passed with the support of both parties, I will add. At the end of the day, the package cost \$70 billion more, and the Senator from Iowa said he couldn't vote for the final work product because it was too expensive. He had authored an amendment that added \$70 billion in cost and then said he couldn't vote for the package because it was too expensive.

Another Senator, from Georgia, added an amendment on the floor—I thought it was a thoughtful amendment—that added in cost \$11 billion to \$30 billion, by some estimates, to give incentives for people to buy homes. It makes sense. We need help in the housing market. Yet this added expense on the bill, this added amendment, which we adopted, could not win that Senator's support. He too was critical of the final product: It cost too much.

So it is hard to follow why so many Republican Senators are criticizing the President's attempt to get this economy back and moving forward, because they are saying it cost too much, when they introduced and passed amendments which added to the cost of the package. It doesn't follow.

And the third point, made by the Republican leader, who came to the floor today and criticized the compromise—the final bill here that we will consider probably tomorrow night—said they cut back on some of the tax cuts for working families.

It is true. The President's original proposal was \$500 for individuals, I think it was up to \$70,000 or \$80,000 in income, and \$1,000 for families. Then when we had to cut back in the cost of the overall bill to win the support of several Republican Senators, the President offered to make a cutback in that area. So when we try to cut back in the cost of the bill to win Republican support, we are criticized for those cutbacks; and when the bill comes to the committee, or to the floor, Republican Senators add amendments that add cost to the bill and then tell us it costs too much. It is hard to follow their logic. I can't.

I am glad that it appears, with our fingers crossed, that there will be at least 60 Senators tomorrow when we vote on this bill that will do something about the state of our economy. This President has inherited the worst economic crisis of any President since Franklin Roosevelt's in 1933. This situation is terrible. It is no Great Depression, thank goodness, but it is terrible. We have lost jobs all over America—

500,000 jobs in the month of December—and 36,000 of them, incidentally, in my home State of Illinois. That is 1,200 jobs a day we have lost in my State in December, I am afraid a like number in the month of January, and there is no end in sight.

The President has stepped up and said: We cannot let the American economy slide into this spiral that is going to create so much hardship for workers losing their jobs and businesses closing. We have to do something. We need a solution. We can't stand back and watch the parade go by. We have to step in and try to stop the negative impact of this economic crisis.

Most Americans—in fact, the overwhelming majority of Americans—believe the President is right in trying to solve this problem. He has said, and they understand, this may not be a 100-percent solution. At the end of the day, we may need to do more or something different. But the alternative is to do nothing, and that seems to be the position of many Senators who are opposing this. They want to wait. They want to wait and see if this economy gets better or they want to return to the old-time religion. What is the old-time religion? It is what we tried last April. When the economy was softening, President George W. Bush came to us and said: I know the solution. I know how to get us out of this problem. It is a tax cut.

Well, if you have been around Congress for a while, you know that when it comes to the Republican Party, the answer to every challenge, every issue, every circumstance is a tax cut. We have a surplus. Is the economy booming? Cut taxes. Do we have problems. Is the economy cratering? Cut taxes. Well, tax cuts do have value, but in certain circumstances they may not work effectively. And we found out last April that our \$150 billion package—and I think that was the number—that President Bush asked for, enacted by the Democratic Congress, didn't work. I believe it was \$300 to individuals and \$600 to families. It may have helped an individual family put some money in savings or pay off a credit card, but at the end of the day, when you step back and look at the big picture—the macro-economic picture—it didn't work. The economy continued to slide downhill.

So the magic elixir of tax cuts, which we hear consistently from the Republican side, even during this crisis, is one that has been tried and failed.

We included tax cuts in this package in an effort to try to win over some Republican votes. It didn't work very well. We got no Republican support in the House and only three Republican Senators who stepped up in the Senate and said they would support it.

What we are trying here is something that is dramatically different; not just tax cuts for working families, which they need, but injecting money into the economy. Why do we need to have the government spending money in this economy? Because Americans are not

spending enough of their own money. We anticipate that this year Americans will spend about \$1 trillion less on goods and services than they ordinarily would.

We have a gross domestic product of about \$14 trillion a year. Well, that is about 7 or 8 percent of it that won't be spent this year. And when you cut back in that much spending, when people are not buying the things they buy—refrigerators and cars and homes and clothing, and all the rest—jobs are lost, businesses contract, and our recession gets deeper. So the President said: Let's put this money into a stimulus or recovery package that will inject new life into this economy and try to get it moving forward again.

It turns out economists—conservatives, liberals, most economists—have said it is worth a try. Historically, it has worked; we should do it now. And the President went further. He said that our goal will be creating or saving 3½ million jobs over the next 2 years. That is an ambitious goal, and I hope we can reach it.

I know those on the other side criticize it. They say: You know what, when you take the total cost of this bill and divide it into the number of jobs, it is a fantastic amount of money for each job. But they have forgotten one basic thing: That new worker in Illinois or in Iowa is not only going to get a paycheck, that worker is going to spend the paycheck. And when the worker spends the paycheck downtown, the people who work at that shop have a job, too. And the people who work at the shop with the job take a paycheck home, and they will go to another shop and spend the paycheck. It moves through the economy over and over again. So to argue that we are spending so much money for a single job overlooks the obvious, overlooks Economics 101. I think I learned this in Georgetown in one of the first classes. It is called the multiplier. That says if I go out and spend a dollar at shop, then maybe 80 cents of that is going to be spent by a worker there, and on and on. So the dollar may turn out to be worth a lot more in terms of the economic activity.

That is the President's goal, to create enough jobs and save enough jobs to breathe life into this economy to start people moving forward again with confidence in making purchases. That is the bottom line.

It also provides, this bill we are going to consider tomorrow, 40 percent in direct relief to working and middle-class families. I talked about the President's tax cuts. He focuses on the working and middle-class families. I think it is the right thing to do. It is about \$400 an individual, \$800 for a family. That will give them a helping hand.

It also doubles the renewable energy generating capacity of our country over 3 years. Is there anyone who doubts the President's position that if we are going to have a strong economy over a long term we need to have more

energy independence, we need to have more renewable sustainable sources of energy right here in our country? This bill, this stimulus package, invests in energy for America's future—good energy, reliable energy, energy that we do not have to bargain with OPEC to have in future years to build our economy.

It invests \$29 billion in the Clean Energy Finance Authority and renewable tax credits. This is a way to encourage the renewable energy sector. In my State of Illinois, in the State of Iowa and a lot of other States, you see the wind turbines when you drive down the highway. In one section of central Illinois are 240 wind turbines that will generate enough clean electricity to supply the electricity needs of Bloomington-Normal, a large—at least by Illinois downstate standards—metropolitan area. More and more of these need to be built. Solar panels, using wind energy, geothermal sources, all of these are clean, thoughtful, home-grown, and make us less dependent on energy sources from overseas.

There is also a dramatic investment, \$150 billion, in infrastructure. Infrastructure is a generic word that does not paint a very specific picture. We are talking about roads and bridges and highways. We are talking about making certain that what we have in our State and States across the Nation is in good repair and safe, and is expanding opportunities for the economy to grow by building these roads and bridges for the future. It is money well spent, as far as I am concerned.

And health care, too. The first casualty for unemployed workers is usually health insurance, so we want to help the families facing unemployment with the costs of health insurance. That to me is money well spent. These families need the peace of mind to know that if somebody gets sick they have a doctor they can go to and a medical bill that at least will get a helping hand to be paid.

There is \$25 billion for school construction—no, not for new buildings but modernizing schools. If you bring energy efficiency to a school, it is going to reduce the cost to the school district and to the property taxpayers who sustain that district.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 5 minutes.

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

Mr. DURBIN. In addition to that, we are going to try to make sure this bill moves us forward when it comes to health care. One of the things we need to do in America, which we have done in the Veterans' Administration, is start putting medical records on computers. The importance of that is obvious to anyone who has visited a modern hospital. You know if a doctor has access to all of your medical records on computer, or a nurse, that they are

more likely to make a better diagnosis, come up with better treatment, save money in the process and have a safer outcome. So if we are going to move toward a health care system ready for this century, we need to bring the Internet into the hospital room and into the hospital setting. This bill makes the investment to do that. It is a critically important investment and it is the starting point I think in moving toward the health care system we need to provide for Americans.

There will be critics. Many of them want to do nothing, let the economy solve its own problems. But most of them are not students of history. The last President facing a major economic crisis, who said let's ride it out, was Herbert Hoover. Herbert Hoover, a Republican President during the Great Depression, said things will get better, the economy will cure itself, the market is a miracle. Guess what happened. More and more people lost jobs, more businesses failed, the stock market cratered and Franklin Roosevelt rode to the rescue.

We have to understand that standing back and watching this economy crater is unacceptable. This President was elected last November 4 to bring real change to this town in the way we do business and real change to this economy so we have a fighting chance for excellence in the 21st century. I think he has the right approach.

Let me add another element. There is a big section of this bill that demands accountability. All of us, whether we voted for or against President Bush's attempts to help the economy—all of us were frustrated at the end of the day that so few dollars could be accounted for. We gave them \$350 billion. At the end of the day we wanted an accounting—those who voted for it and for the taxpayers. We couldn't get it. We still don't know what happened to the money.

This bill is different. This bill not only is going to provide inspectors general in each of the departments to watch the money as it is being spent, accountability through the States and through the local units of government, but Web sites as well for taxpayers to follow the course of this bill. It is a new level of openness and transparency we have not seen before and it is long overdue. I am glad it is there. I think that kind of openness is what the American taxpayers want to see, too.

They want solutions, they do not want political squabbling. They want to have people working together here rather than like in the House of Representatives, where no Republicans would even support the idea of a stimulus package. They want accountability, transparency—so they know their Federal tax dollars are being spent wisely—and they want honesty too. This President has been honest from the beginning and he said: I believe this will work. The best minds in the economy tell me this will work. If it does not, we are going to try some-

thing that does. We are going to be honest with you about the outcome here.

That is the best we can ask from our leaders, that they give it their best effort, good-faith efforts to solve our problems and be honest with us if they do not succeed. We need to succeed. There is too much at stake here.

I have seen it in Illinois. We have seen it all across this country. This particular proposal for Illinois is one I am excited about, creating or saving 148,000 jobs over the next 2 years. We need it. As I mentioned, we lost 36,000 jobs in December. We need to do something to stop this outflow of jobs.

A making work pay tax cut of up to \$800 will affect about 5 million workers and their families in my State; 156,000 families are going to be eligible for an American opportunity tax credit, which makes college affordable. When I talk to college presidents, they tell me: I am worried. Kids are coming into the dean's office and saying: Dad's business is going down or Mom lost her job. I may not be able to finish here.

Let's give these families a helping hand, a tax credit so these kids can stay in school. If these young people end up dropping out of school with a mountain of student loans and no degree, that's the worst possible outcome. This will help us avoid it.

An additional \$100 a month in unemployment insurance for those who lost their job doesn't sound like much to most families, but for these folks \$100 means an awful lot.

We are providing funding sufficient to modernize 412 schools in Illinois so our children have the labs and classrooms and libraries and energy efficiency they need.

We are doubling the renewable energy generating capacity. I think there will be more wind turbines that will be installed in my State. There will be some happy farmers renting their plots of land for that and some communities that will have cleaner energy sources.

This is a bill that looks forward. To those looking in the rearview mirror of what we tried last year and want to try it again—we gave them their chance and it didn't work. It is worth a try now. I am glad three Republican Senators stepped forward and said they are willing to give this President a chance. It shows the kind of bipartisan cooperation we need more of.

I hope at the end of the day even more will vote for this and I hope the next time we debate an important issue on the floor that more Senators from both sides of the aisle will come together to solve the problems the American people face and do the job they sent us here to do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, we have seen a whirlwind of activity on this so-called economic stimulus package.

We began by watching the partisanship in the House prevail, where the

House passed a package strictly along party lines. No House Republican voted for it. And 11 Democrats joined the Republicans in voting no.

Then we had a mark-up in the Senate Finance Committee, the committee that I am ranking member on. Over 200 amendments were filed. Some amendments were agreed to, like the amendment I filed for a 1-year alternative minimum tax "AMT" patch.

But many others, specifically Republican amendments, failed or were never brought to a vote.

Unfortunately, there was a tacit agreement among the Democratic members of my committee to vote no on any Republican amendment, regardless of the merits. Those on my side of the aisle did not find that very bipartisan.

Then a floor debate in the Senate ensued. It lasted a full week. I am happy that the debate gave many Members on my side of the aisle an opportunity to discuss how this legislation could be improved. I was dismayed, however, on the process. For example, there were a number of amendments that I filed that were never given a fair vote.

Bottom line, they were blocked. I was not the only Republican Senator that got locked out of the process.

And speaking of process, let me briefly discuss how this conference committee process worked. Or shall I say did not work. It was not a conference that permitted bipartisan negotiations.

I have often used the following analogy to define bipartisanship. It is an analogy that married couples can understand. That analogy comes from the example of Barbara and CHUCK GRASSLEY going to buy a car. If I buy the car and take it to Barbara that is not a truly marital decision. If we both go to the dealership and agree on the car, then that is truly a joint marital decision.

The same logic applies to bipartisan legislating. If Senator REID shows me a deal that has been done by Democratic conferees, which he was courteous enough to do Wednesday morning, without my participation as the leading Republican tax writer, that's not bipartisan. There is no "bi" in that partisan.

So let no one be mistaken that this conference agreement is the result of bipartisan negotiations. While Republicans were courteously consulted at the member and staff level, we were never at the negotiating table. Speaker PELOSI best described the bottom line on the process.

She said: "Yes, we wrote the bill. Yes, we won the election." That quote comes right out of the front page of the Washington Post, dated Friday, January 23, 2009.

Now, one can argue that all that I have just described is water under the bridge. We now have a conference agreement that both Houses of Congress are on the verge of approving. I will be voting against the package.

But before I cast my vote I wanted to take this time to applaud the inclusion

of specific proposals in this conference agreement that I advocated for. While being locked out of the process, I am happy to see that my commonsense proposals were ultimately included in this final bill.

The first commonsense proposal is placing income limits on the subsidy for COBRA benefits. As the provision was originally drafted, which provided involuntarily terminated workers a subsidy to help pay for their health insurance, there were no income limits on the eligibility for the subsidy.

I want to remind my friends in the media that the House passed this provision with no income limits. The Senate Finance Committee approved this provision with no income limits. And the Nelson-Collins substitute, which garnered 61 votes in the Senate, was passed with no income limits.

That means if the original provision that cleared so many legislative hurdles made it into law, Wall Street CEOs and hedge fund managers, who made millions of dollars while running our economy into the ground, would have received a taxpayer-funded subsidy to pay for their health insurance.

In my opinion, this is outrageous. Just last week the Obama administration released guidelines for capping compensation paid to executives whose financial institution receives taxpayer dollars through the Troubled Asset Relief Program. The COBRA subsidy provision was in clear contradiction to our President's policy.

During the Senate Finance Committee mark-up, however, I offered an amendment that would have placed income limits on the eligibility for the COBRA subsidy. When I offered my amendment, some Democratic committee members rebuffed my efforts with trumped up charges that the IRS would not be able to administer income limits. It appeared that my Democratic friends on the committee, who voted in favor of the chairman's mark, wanted to give the taxpayer-funded subsidy to Wall Street CEOs and hedge fund managers. But in the end, Chairman BAUCUS gave me a commitment to at least look at an income cap.

So I filed an amendment during the floor debate. And I continued pressing the point both publicly and privately. I was disappointed that my amendment was never given a fair vote.

Simply put, my amendment provided that if a worker who was involuntarily terminated from their job earned income in excess of \$125,000 for individuals and \$250,000 for families during 2008, this worker would not be eligible to receive the subsidy.

Some Members of this body asked me why I set these limits at \$125,000 and \$250,000. It is simple. When candidate Obama was campaigning to be President Obama, he continually said that he wanted to raise taxes on families making over \$250,000 a year. Why? Because then, candidate Obama felt that these people are too "rich" to pay lower taxes.

So it logically followed that if these families are too "rich" to receive a tax benefit in the form of lower taxes, are these people not too "rich" to receive a taxpayer-funded subsidy for health insurance?

I applaud the inclusion of income limits for the COBRA subsidy. Although, the income limits are set at \$145,000 and \$290,000, I am happy that my work was the reason it was added during the conference committee.

The second proposal included in this final conference agreement is something that is of vital importance to workers who have been displaced by trade. I am talking about the temporary reauthorization of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, or TAA.

At the beginning of this year, I engaged with Chairman BAUCUS and our counterparts on the Ways and Means Committee, Chairman RANGEL and Ranking Member CAMP, to see if we could work out a compromise to reauthorize the trade adjustment assistance programs that we could all support.

That engagement led to weeks of intensive negotiations. They were not easy negotiations. But they were truly bipartisan and bicameral negotiations. And they resulted in a compromise that I am proud to support.

That is the way the process should work. I wish the rest of the provisions in the conference report had been developed in such a bipartisan way. If they had, we would have seen more Republican support for this conference report.

Hopefully, the majority will not repeat the partisan process that produced this conference report.

I want to highlight some of the reasons why I support our compromise on trade adjustment assistance.

The fact is, the current trade adjustment assistance program is not doing enough to help American workers. It is outdated, overly rigid, and fails to incorporate appropriate oversight and accountability at the State and Federal level.

Our compromise addresses each of those concerns.

First, it extends the benefits of the program to service workers. Services now account for almost 80 percent of our economy. It doesn't make sense to exclude service workers from eligibility for trade adjustment assistance if they lose their job due to trade.

If a call center in the United States is closed and the operation moved to India, for example, those workers are not currently eligible for trade adjustment assistance. Our compromise changes that.

But it does so in a way that preserves the requirement that there be a causal link between trade and the loss of a job. Our compromise treats manufacturing workers and service workers the same, if trade contributed importantly to the workers' job loss, then they may be eligible for adjustment assistance.

We also improved the program by interjecting much more flexibility, so

that individual workers are empowered to decide for themselves how best to respond if they lose their jobs.

Workers can choose between full-time and part-time training, or full-time work with limited wage insurance. Trade-impacted workers can even take advantage of training and case management services before they lose their jobs.

Our compromise increases the funding for worker retraining to accommodate these expansions in the pool of potentially eligible workers and the array of benefits that are made available to eligible workers.

But it does so in a way that protects against inefficient spending of taxpayer dollars. For example, for the first time, we have capped funding for administrative expenses at an amount equal to 10 percent of training funds. I insisted on that.

In addition, our compromise requires changes in the way the Secretary of Labor allocates and distributes funds, so that States that do not need additional funds are not building up their kitties at the expense of States that need those funds now.

We also require States to implement control measures to ensure that the data they collect and report is accurate and timely. The Department of Labor needs accurate data in order to administer the trade adjustment assistance program efficiently.

And we require the Department of Labor to collect and post the data on the Department's Web site, to increase transparency and make the information more readily accessible to the public.

I am confident that the compromise legislation that it have helped to craft will provide immediate and long-term benefits for workers in Iowa and across the United States.

Separately, our compromise reauthorizes the trade adjustment assistance for firms program, and it improves and reauthorizes the trade adjustment assistance for farmers program.

The farmers program was enacted as part of the Trade Act of 2002, and it has not operated as planned.

We have made it easier for farmers to demonstrate that they are eligible for benefits under the program, and we have redirected those benefits to focus on developing and implementing business plans to better adjust to imports.

We also established a trade adjustment assistance for communities program to help entire communities respond to the pressures of globalization. One component of that program is a new community college and career training grant program which I have been working to develop over the past few years.

This is a timely, targeted, and temporary grant program to help educational institutions develop and offer the most appropriate courses to retrain trade-impacted workers.

The program will improve and expand the educational opportunities

available to eligible workers. It is an investment in the long-term competitiveness of the American workforce.

Mr. President, I have already noted that our compromise is the result of a bipartisan effort that reflects the work of four offices.

There are portions of the amendment that I might have done differently if it were solely up to me.

But that is the nature of compromise. And the overall policy embodied in this amendment is a good one that will do a lot of good for a lot of Americans, in Iowa and across the United States.

Equally important, if we enact this amendment into law, it will help unlock the trade agenda so we can progress with other important priorities.

Chief among those is implementation of the Colombia trade agreement, which is my top trade priority.

And then we need to turn to our other trade agreements with Panama and South Korea as well.

We need to level the playing field so that our exporters, service suppliers, and farmers can increase their sales to foreign countries.

It is more important than ever.

We have had a social compact on trade for over 45 years.

One side of that compact is to address them of trade-displaced workers, and we are doing that with the compromise I have helped to negotiate on trade adjustment assistance.

The other side is to open up new markets for U.S. exports. That was a driving principle when President Kennedy established the Trade Adjustment Assistance program.

President Obama should hold true to that principle by doing everything he can to create new export opportunities, starting with implementation of our pending trade agreements.

A pro-growth trade agenda should be integral to our economic recovery strategy. I stand ready to work with the President and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to accomplish that.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, the conference report for H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, includes provisions that would modernize and expand the trade adjustment assistance program to reflect today's economy. This has been my highest trade priority. It has been the priority of workers and labor unions. And it has been the priority of the business community. We all recognize the importance of passing a TAA bill that helps American workers, firms, farmers and communities.

Earlier this week, I received letters of support from the following groups: AFL-CIO; Change to Win; United Auto Workers; United Steelworkers; Trade and American Competitiveness Coalition with over 50 businesses; and the Information Technology Industry Council. I ask unanimous consent that a few of these letters of support be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CHANGE TO WIN,

Washington, DC, February 11, 2009.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Senate Majority Leader,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Senate Minority Leader,
Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
House Minority Leader,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS AND CONFEREES: Change to Win's seven affiliated unions and more than six million members urge you to include the Baucus-Grassley-Rangel-Camp Trade Adjustment Assistance amendment in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act conference report.

This amendment will bring many long-needed improvements in the TAA program, such as extending assistance to workers in services-related industries, increasing access to wage insurance and health insurance benefits, and expanding training. This bipartisan, bicameral compromise is an important part of our economic recovery and should be incorporated into the recovery package.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER CHAFE,
Executive Director.

FEBRUARY 9, 2009.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Senate Majority Leader,
Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Senate Minority Leader,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
House Minority Leader,
Washington, DC.

We, the undersigned companies and associations, urge you to include the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Act of 2009 in the conference report for H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

We applaud Chairman Baucus, Ranking Member Grassley, Chairman Rangel, and Ranking Member Camp for their tireless bipartisan, bicameral efforts to craft the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Act of 2009. Their hard work has created a good compromise package that will be a significant improvement over existing law, offering more flexible training opportunities so workers can transition into new careers in a dynamic 21st century economy.

We support the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Act of 2009 and hope you will include it in the conference report for the American Recovery and Investment Act.

Sincerely,

Abbott; American Chemistry Council; Applied Materials, Inc.; Auto Trade Policy Council; Bechtel Corporation; Business Roundtable; California Chamber of Commerce; Cargill, Incorporated; Caterpillar Inc.; Chevron.

Cisco Systems, Inc.; Citi; Coalition of Service Industries; CompTIA; Corning Incorporated; Eastman Kodak Company; Emergency Committee for American Trade; FedEx; Financial Services Forum.

Grocery Manufacturers Association; Hewlett-Packard Company; IBM Corporation; Information Technology Industry Council (ITI); Intel Corporation;

Microsoft Corporation; National Association of Manufacturers; National Foreign Trade Council; National Electrical Manufacturers Association; Ohio Alliance for International Trade.

Oracle Corporation; Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America; Pyramid Mountain Lumber; Retail Industry Leaders Association; Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA); Sun Microsystems; Sun Mountain Lumber; TechAmerica; Telecommunications Industry Association.

The American Business Council; The Association of Equipment Manufacturers; The Boeing Company; The Coca-Cola Company; The Dow Chemical Company; The General Electric Company; The McGraw-Hill Companies; The Stanford Financial Group; United States Council for International Business; United Technologies Corporation; UPS; U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.; Whirlpool.

INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED
AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL
IMPLEMENT WORKERS
OF AMERICA,

Washington, DC, February 10, 2009.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington,
DC.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND MAJORITY LEADER REID: This week the House and Senate are expected to have a conference on the proposed American Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The UAW wishes to share with you and the other conferees our views on several important provisions in this legislation.

The UAW strongly supports the core elements of the House and Senate bills, including the provisions that would:

Give tax relief to 95% of working families, amounting to \$500 for individuals and \$1,000 for couples;

Increase spending on infrastructure, energy efficiency, and health care information technology;

Provide fiscal relief for states and localities through an increase in FMAP and other mechanisms; and

Extend assistance to the unemployed through an extension and expansion of UI benefits and COBRA.

We believe these initiatives will create millions of jobs and provide an immediate stimulus for our economy, while also helping to alleviate the impact of the current recession on the most vulnerable Americans. Many of these measures also represent important investments that will lay the basis for long-term economic growth.

The UAW applauds the inclusion of provisions in the House and Senate bills that would encourage investment in advanced technology vehicles and their key components, while also providing assistance to the struggling domestic auto industry. This includes funding for advanced battery manufacturing, the purchase of fuel efficient vehicles by the federal government, and the purchase and manufacturing of plug-in hybrids, as well as monetization of banked tax credits and restoration of the tax deduction for interest and taxes related to the purchase of vehicles. We urge you to retain these provisions in the final conference report.

In addition to these elements, the UAW urges you to include in the final conference report:

The stronger Buy American language in the Senate bill; these provisions will help to ensure that taxpayer funds are used to create jobs for American workers and to stimu-

late the U.S. economy, rather than being sent overseas;

The TAA reform package that has been agreed to by Senators Baucus and Grassley and Representatives Rangel and Camp; these historic reforms will provide vital assistance to workers who have lost their jobs due to trade, and correct numerous longstanding deficiencies in the TAA program;

The more expansive provisions in the House bill that would provide health care to more laid off workers both through an expansion of Medicaid and through a 65% subsidy under COBRA; and

The provisions in the House bill that would provide greater spending for school construction and assistance to states and localities; in addition to generating jobs and boosting the economy, these measures would provide important investments in education and other vital social programs.

The UAW believes it is critically important that Congress act quickly to approve the proposed American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Thank you for considering the points discussed above as you fashion the final conference report on this legislation.

Sincerely,

ALAN REUTHER,
Legislative Director.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I have always been a steadfast supporter of Federal funding for museums and the arts in New York and across the country. When I voted in favor of Senator COBURN's amendment No. 309 to H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, I thought the amendment was only targeted to casinos and golf courses and was not aware it also included museums and other cultural centers. The arts community knows they have had—and will certainly continue to have—my full support.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the papers from the House will be here momentarily, within the next few minutes. Senator MCCONNELL and I have spoken a number of times during the day. We believe it is fair that Members have an opportunity to study this big document. The basic document people have already read but, of course, that is what the conference is about. They change things. So this should be here in a short time. This will give Members all night to look at this. Senator MCCONNELL and I talked a few minutes ago. We will come in tomorrow at a reasonable hour, spend all day debating this. This would give people the opportunity to read all the papers. Then we would vote sometime late tomorrow afternoon or in the early evening. I have talked to Senator MCCONNELL. He has been certainly more than fair. As everyone knows, Senator KENNEDY is ill. He came here earlier this week, and it would be to his health advantage not

to have to come back tomorrow. Senator MCCONNELL has agreed that is, in fact, the case. It doesn't change the vote count, but it means we can set a definite time which is very helpful.

In addition, Senator BROWN's mother died. The celebration of his mother's life starts tomorrow. Senator BROWN has agreed to leave for, I don't know what it would be called in his religious belief, a viewing, and people will come and greet his family. It is a very large extended family. They will do that. That would be completed around 8 tomorrow night. So we are going to keep the vote open for Senator BROWN until he arrives tomorrow night. This is not the first time we have done this.

I have announced we will hold our votes to 15 minutes, plus we give Members 5 minutes' leeway. After that, the vote is closed. But we have always said that on a close vote, we would keep the vote open until everything is done. Everyone understands that when one's mother dies, we have to be a little more understanding of the situation. This is very difficult for SHERROD BROWN to go home because he has to turn right around and come back here the same night. He is going to fly here and fly back the same night so he can be at the funeral Saturday morning. I appreciate Senator MCCONNELL and all Senators working toward doing this. We will come in at some reasonable time and enter a unanimous consent request that I am confident will be granted so we can do this. We are going to close shortly and come back in the morning at an agreed-upon time with the minority leader.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAACP

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the 100th anniversary of the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, and to congratulate this remarkable organization on its historic achievements.

In the summer of 1908, a race riot took place in Springfield, IL, my hometown and the hometown of President Abraham Lincoln. A mob of White residents destroyed homes and businesses owned by African Americans, and forced thousands of Black residents to flee Springfield. Two prominent Black men were lynched within half a mile of the home President Lincoln had owned and within 2 miles of his grave.

One of these two men was William Donnegan, a longtime resident of Springfield who was a friend of President Lincoln and the cobbler who made the President's boots. The mob went to Mr. Donnegan's home, cut his throat and lynched him in a school yard across the street.

These tragic events were widely reported at the time and shocked the Nation. It seemed clear that if African Americans living in President Lincoln's hometown could be attacked, then such violence could happen anywhere in the United States.