

them, I think we have a way forward to get this done.

On the small business matter, we are pretty close to having an agreement. The Republican leader has to check with his people on a number of issues. I have to check with mine. But I think we are headed so that we can have a number of votes and complete that matter before we leave.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

RESPONSE TO THE RECESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the American people have run out of patience with Washington's response to the recession. The first response was a so-called stimulus bill that was meant to keep unemployment under 8 percent. But after borrowing \$1 trillion, unemployment is stuck well above 9 percent—some would argue closer to 10 percent. Now Democrats in Washington want to do it again.

Later on today, our friends on the other side will vote for a summer sequel to the original stimulus. A year and a half after the first stimulus, the seemingly unlimited spending continues.

You will recall the original stimulus was meant to be timely, targeted, and temporary. Yet here we are again, a year and a half later, and they are already coming back for more. The \$100 billion they got for teachers the first time wasn't enough.

Forget about the fact that more than a third of the original \$100 billion hasn't even been spent and that none of the extra money they are asking for has to be used to retain teachers. Our friends on the other side are now in the business of paying for States to hire more workers even if they can't afford it on their own. Why? Why? Because it creates a permanent need for future State bailouts, at a time when we can least afford it.

The same with health care spending: The original stimulus included about \$90 billion in additional Medicaid spending—funds that were said to be timely, targeted, and temporary. Yet here we are, a year and a half later, and they want billions more.

Let's be clear: This bill is a brazen attempt to funnel more money to public employee unions before an election at a moment of record deficits and debt, and to set the stage for a massive tax hike before the end of the year. It is time Democrats in Congress stop funneling billions of dollars to their favorite constituencies and asking the American people to pay for it with higher taxes. It is time they actually do something to address the jobs crisis in this country rather than using this and every other crisis as an opportunity to advance their vision of government without bounds.

Enough is enough. Democrats can say these bills are a response to the job crisis all they want, but the American people have already issued their verdict. The American people have seen the bitter results of the Democrats' so-called economic agenda. Every bill they pass only adds more burden on the people we need to get us out of this economic ditch. Whether it is the health care bill or financial regulation, every bill they pass seems to have as a prerequisite that it kill more jobs. If a bill doesn't kill jobs or make it harder to create them, they are not particularly interested.

When the centerpiece of your jobs agenda is to pass a bill that adds another \$34 billion to the national debt to get checks to millions of chronically unemployed Americans who can't find work in the climate you have created, then it is time for a different approach. The approach of the past year and a half isn't working. Unemployment has now been above 9 percent for more than a year. Yet Democrats can't seem to come up with anything other than to expand the size of government, transfer more Federal dollars to the States.

Americans are tired of their tax dollars being spent on more government, more regulations, more taxes, and more burden. They want new solutions that actually enable businesses to recover. Those are the kinds of solutions Republicans are offering and that Americans want.

IRAQ

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the President today announced his plans to transition the mission of our military in Iraq from combat to an advisory and assistance mission. For context, it is worth remembering that prior to the full deployment of this force, some Democrats were already declaring the surge the President is referring to today as a complete failure.

But thanks to the vision and the determination of General Petraeus, General McChrystal, and Ambassador Crocker, the counterinsurgency strategy was allowed to take root and to succeed. The population was protected, al-Qaida in Iraq was weakened, and, crucially, our political relationship with the Maliki government grew stronger.

None of this was easy. Between that brave decision to execute a counterinsurgency strategy, the surge, and the Anbar awakening, we had to prevail on many votes on timelines for withdrawal and fights over whether we would ever fund ongoing combat operations—all of which allowed for the strategic framework agreement and the security agreement between the U.S. and Iraqi Governments—by the way, executed in the previous administration—that outlined drawdown of forces and the transition of mission the President announced today. Of course, the Iraqis must work through the formation of the next government and continue to combat insurgents.

There are valuable lessons in all of this as General Petraeus works to build the Afghan security forces and defeat the Taliban. The surge in Iraq helped create the conditions that resulted in the security agreement between our two countries, which took a lot of hard work, and back in 2007, some—including the current President and Vice President—thought it could not be achieved. The credit, of course, goes to General Petraeus, General Odierno, our fighting forces, Ambassador Crocker, and our Iraqi partners. It is their sacrifice we should remember today.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I know we are all eager to return to our States next week to talk to our constituents. We have 1 more week to go. We hope to complete everything this week. I just outlined to the Chair and the Members listening about the heavy workload we have that we need to finish. We should be able to finish this week. That is what we all want, and we are going to do our utmost to do that. There are some matters we have to complete this week. We have an extremely important list of unfinished business.

Democrats have dedicated this work period, as in every work period, to jobs, putting the unemployed back to work, helping small businesses grow and saving jobs hanging in the balance. I am disappointed in my friend, the Republican leader, who has denigrated the work we have done and tried to do. Remember, because of the policies of the prior administration, 8 million jobs were lost. There is no dispute about that. In the last 6 months George Bush was President, we lost 3 million jobs. The economic recovery package—or the stimulus bill, as it is known—has created or saved at least 3 million jobs. That doesn't make up for the 8 million that were lost, but it is a step in the right direction.

Talk to anyone in the State of Nevada or any other State about the money in this recovery act that helped teachers. The reason there weren't huge layoffs last year is because of that bill. FMAP is the reason why there weren't more layoffs than there were—as a result of that money that went to States.

We have taken historic steps to clean up Wall Street.

We have made progress on an energy plan that will create hundreds of thousands of green jobs, lower consumers' utility bills, make sure BP pays the price for its disaster, and end our dangerous addiction to oil. It is not everything we wanted to do. It wasn't our first choice, but it is our first step, because we could not get any Republican support for an energy bill.

After a shamefully long fight, we finally extended unemployment insurance to the hardest hit victims of the