

The plan makes transition assistance—including resume-writing workshops and career counseling—mandatory for all servicemembers being discharged. Although our veterans are coming home with greater technical and leadership skills than ever before, those skills don't always translate to a civilian resume. This program will help bridge that gap.

Many Federal agencies, such as the VA and Homeland Security, badly need employees with the unique skills veterans possess. This legislation will also make it possible for servicemembers to apply for those jobs before they leave the military. This will allow soldiers to transition from serving their country in uniform to serving the civilian world without a gap in their employment.

To keep our promise to older veterans, the legislation will expand education and training opportunities at community colleges and technical schools for 100,000 unemployed veterans who served before September 11. Democrats believe we owe it to the men and women who have fought for us to fight for them here at home.

The VOW to Hire Heroes is our fourth attempt to pass commonsense legislation that puts Americans back to work and helps jump-start our economy. Senate Republicans unanimously opposed our last three jobs bills, although those bills had the support of the vast majority of Americans—Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike. Meanwhile, Republicans have yet to propose a single idea of their own to create jobs. Their obstruction has cost hundreds of thousands of teacher and first responder jobs, it has cost hundreds of thousands of construction jobs, and put reconstruction of our Nation's crumbling roads, bridges, and runways on hold.

Now we will see whether the Senate Republicans are willing to put jobs for veterans at risk as well. I certainly hope they are not. I hope they will join us this week in supporting the legislation that uses ideas originally proposed by Republicans and Democrats to put this Nation's veterans back to work without adding a penny to the deficit.

I believe every man and woman serving in the Senate today is a patriot. I know each and every one of us supports the members of the U.S. armed services and is grateful to every veteran who has served. This week we have the opportunity to express our gratitude and our patriotism with action.

So far, Republicans have stood firm against even the most reasonable plan to create millions of jobs for the sake of politics. It is only a matter of time before they break and join Democrats in our efforts to create jobs and get the economy back on track.

As Veterans Day fast approaches, I urge my Republican colleagues to abandon partisanship and help us honor our commitment to this country's heroes.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

#### WORKING TOGETHER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for the past 3 years, President Obama and Democratic leaders in Congress have spent most of their time pushing policies that actually undermine the private sector. They may have the best of intentions, but the fact is they made a bad economy worse. Unemployment has now stood at 9 percent for more consecutive months than for any other period since World War II, and there are now more than 1 million fewer jobs in this country than when the President's first stimulus bill was signed into law.

So the American people gave the President a chance to do something about jobs and the economy and he failed. That is why last year the American people put Republicans in charge of the House of Representatives—so they could try a different approach, and that is what they have done. For nearly a year now, House Republicans have been following through on their pledge to put Americans back to work by passing bill after bill aimed at helping businesses create jobs.

The problem is, every time Republicans pass one of these bills over in the House, Democrats in the Senate refuse to take it up. The Democrats who run the Senate are letting all these bills die.

Some people want to know why this is happening. They want to know why the Senate will not take up these bills. The answer is actually pretty simple. President Obama and his political advisers have put out the word they do not want Congress to get anything done around here until after next year's election, so the President can go around on the bus and blame Congress for the country's problems, and Democrats in the Senate are lining up right behind him. They are doing the President's bidding.

But that is not stopping Republicans in the House from doing the work they were elected to do, and it is not going to keep the Republican minority in the Senate from calling on Democrats to act.

To date, House Republicans have passed more than 20 pieces of legislation designed to do two things: make it easier for small businesses to create jobs and bills that would pass on a broad bipartisan basis.

Last week, I highlighted 15 such bills the House had already passed and that Senate Democrats should take up. This week, Senate Republicans will highlight several additional such bills the House passed just last week. We are going to keep on talking about these bills until Senate Democrats realize there is no reason we shouldn't take

them up, pass them on a bipartisan basis, and actually do something on jobs around here.

For nearly 3 years, President Obama has demanded we pass massive legislation he knows Republicans have problems with. What we are saying is, let's start with things that have bipartisan support and that we know can pass instead of that other approach.

Since Republicans control the House and Democrats control the Senate, we are not likely to agree on big partisan stuff. But there are a lot of other job-creating measures we actually could agree on. Why don't we focus on them? Let's work together on the things we can all agree on, as we did last month on the trade agreements.

Here is just one example out of many. Last week, the House passed a bill called the Small Company Capital Formation Act, H.R. 1070. It got 421 votes, including 183 Democrats. Only one person in the House voted against the bill.

Here is a jobs bill that is about as popular as Mother's Day. There is no reason not to pass it in the Senate right now. Right now, promising businesses aren't going public because they simply can't afford the high cost of managing the mountain of government paperwork they are required to under current law. So instead of going out there and raising money to grow and hire, they are holding back. They are not expanding and they are not hiring.

We recently heard from the CEO of a pharmaceutical company from Fort Washington, PA, who said companies such as his are at a major disadvantage if they come up with promising new drugs. He has at least one such promising new drug in the pipeline for chronic kidney disease but can't take it to the next level. If firms such as this want to expand and hire, they need to be able to raise capital from investors so they do not go into debt. But current law keeps them from doing so because of all the regulatory burdens that come along with it. I think we should be removing these barriers to growth for companies such as this one, and 183 Democrats in the House actually agree with me.

President Obama actually supports the idea too. He said so in his speech to a joint session of Congress back in September. So this bill is as bipartisan as it gets. One will not find a bill any more bipartisan than this—passed overwhelmingly in the House and supported by the President of the United States. The only thing standing in the way right now is Senate Democrats. They just will not take yes for an answer.

It is only a matter of time before the American people catch on to the Democrats' refusal to act. Once they do, Republicans will be ready with a long and growing list of bipartisan bills that have already passed the House and that we believe the President of the United States would sign. So let's not delay any longer. Let's stop the games, and let's do the work we were sent to do.

## RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

## MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein up to 10 minutes each.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. I ask to speak in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## TAX REFORM

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about creating more good-paying jobs in America and how tax reform can play a key role in job creation if it is done right. As we all know, no Member of Congress has a piece of machinery on their desk that is a job creation device. We cannot just start something like this, press a button, and then after it whirs around a bunch of times it creates a lot of new jobs. New jobs do not just come shooting out that way. Nobody has a contraption like that in the Senate, and the reality is the President does not have one nor does anybody else in America.

But there are policies that are relevant to how we create more good-paying jobs, and those involve first looking at what has worked in the past and, second, what hard, objective data is relevant to the future. Nobody can know the ideal, sure-fire way to create jobs, but we can document what has worked in the past.

In the case of comprehensive tax reform, what we know is that after the 1986 Tax Reform Act where Democrats and Republicans cleaned out scores of tax preferences to hold down marginal rates and keep progressivity, our country created 6.3 million new jobs in those 2 years after that tax reform was enacted. I am not going to say on the floor of the Senate that each and every one of those jobs was the result of tax reform, but certainly independent authorities point to that tax reform effort as a key factor in creating those jobs. With at least 14 million Americans out of work in our country right now, it would be legislative malpractice for Congress to ignore the

facts that document the results of the last tax reform effort in job creation.

When we look at the possibilities should we not pay special attention to what has worked in the past? The reality is, as the Presiding Officer knows, our country has tried just about every other tool in the economic toolbox. We have seen the Recovery Act. We have seen that the Fed is essentially all in with its program of quantitative easing. We have had a whole host of other initiatives in the housing area and in the automobile area and a whole host of other areas. The fact is, the one tool in the economic toolshed that nobody has picked up is fundamental tax reform. It is my view that it is time for the Congress, working with the President, to pick up on a proven model that a host of progressive Democrats and conservative Republicans, led by a conservative Republican President, deployed 25 years ago to spur economic growth and create millions of new jobs, which I think we all understand our people in our economy need desperately.

Given that success, it is no wonder that Democrats and Republicans, as well as economists and think-tanks and bipartisan commissions, are again calling for the Congress to take up the cause of tax reform. We are very hopeful the bipartisan Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction can also bring together Democrats and Republicans as part of their work to lay out the strategy for moving ahead on tax reform.

There is no shortage of good reasons for Congress to look at this particular approach to job creation. It is bipartisan, it has been proven before, and certainly the basic principles—simplifying the Tax Code, cleaning out the clutter, and holding down rates across the board—make just as much sense today as they did a quarter century ago.

It has been argued that since the last change in our tax law there have been close to 15,000 tax changes—one for almost every working day year in and year out. So what we have on our hands now is a dysfunctional antigrowth mess. That is why I think it is particularly important that we look at moving now rather than waiting until another election or taking a detour to reform only the corporate Tax Code while, for example, leaving small businesses and working families stuck with the same broken Tax Code they have today.

Let me point out to those who say we cannot do tax reform in a divisive climate, a divided Congress and White House, as we move into an election, the fact is fundamental tax reform was passed on the eve of an election a quarter century ago—passed on the eve of an election. I say that because I know one of the fundamental architects of that tax reform, Senator Packwood, whose seat I now hold in the Senate, was not available for the bill signing because he had a community event back home.

The fact is, there is an opportunity now to move ahead with comprehensive tax reform. We have good people who have expertise in tax law on the supercommittee—Chairman BAUCUS, Senator KERRY, Congressman CAMP, Senator PORTMAN—Democrats and Republicans who have been involved in budget and tax issues for years and years with great expertise on these issues.

I want to take just a minute this afternoon to discuss some eye-opening new information on an issue that I know is being debated in the Congress, and my sense is the supercommittee is looking at it as well; that is, the question of splitting tax reform into separate corporate and individual pieces.

Last week, the Joint Committee on Taxation issued an important report that all Members ought to pay close attention to as Congress looks at tax reform as part of either a potential debt deal or other legislation. The reason I want to discuss it this afternoon is we all understand as part of the legislative process just about everything is negotiable, but there is one thing that is not negotiable—that is the accuracy of the numbers.

When the official number cruncher for taxes says they cannot make the numbers add up, Members of the Senate and the Congress have to pay attention. The new report by the Joint Committee on Taxation says—and, of course, they are the official scorekeeper for tax policy—the Congress essentially has a choice to make. We can either provide all American companies significantly lower tax rates or we can allow multinational companies to continue to avoid paying taxes on their overseas income. But the Joint Committee on Taxation says it is really not possible to do both. There is not enough money in the corporate Tax Code to do both without further increasing the budget deficit.

The Joint Committee was asked to provide its estimate of the lowest corporate rate that could be achieved by eliminating corporate tax expenditures, the various credits, deductions, and exemptions that lower the actual amount of taxes our businesses pay. In response, the joint committee estimated that 28 percent is the lowest possible corporate rate that could be achieved from eliminating corporate tax breaks and still not increase the deficit—in effect, be revenue neutral.

Mr. President, 28 percent is certainly lower than the current top rate, but it is higher than what—certainly many in the business community and the Congress have argued—is needed for U.S. companies to be competitive in the global economy. Most in the business community want to lower the top rate to 25 percent or even lower. The joint committee has determined that 28 percent is the lowest the corporate rate can be reduced to without adding to the deficit.

This new report by the Joint Committee on Taxation ought to be a real wake-up call in Washington, DC. For