

their part, understandable because they are not certain of their own stability in their job or their small business. They are uncertain about the future of our economy and, of course, the war which we are waging has led people to have a certain personal austerity, a little less flamboyance when it comes to their lifestyle. It is understandable. It reflects the spirit of sacrifice.

So what we need to do in Congress is to consider what it will take to turn this around. How can we breathe life back into this economy and get it moving forward? They have called it an economic stimulus package or an economic recovery package. Whatever the description, it is clear to me Congress should do something and do it immediately.

Several weeks ago, I called together business and labor leaders in my home State of Illinois, in the city of Chicago. Some of the largest corporations were represented, as well as small businesses and labor unions, and I said to them: Tell me what the problem is as you see it; what do you think the solution should be.

They came amazingly to a consensus. Seated around this table were Democrats and Republicans and Independents, people in labor, people in business. They said: It is our impression we have too much production in America and not enough consumption. There are too many cars and refrigerators and washers and dryers waiting for buyers. So we need to give the American people the resources and the confidence to take money, go to the store, and make an important purchase. They said that consumer confidence is critical to any kind of economic stimulus; focus on the consumers.

Secondly, they said to do it in a hurry because if there is going to be an impact on this economy, do not wait. Congress has a tendency to identify problems and then spend months, if not years, waiting to respond. Well, when it comes to the economy, we cannot afford to do that.

The third thing they said is, do not do anything today that you will regret tomorrow. Make this a temporary fix so when it is all over, we will not have a problem we have to cope with for years to come.

This is the advice of a diverse group of people who came together in Chicago. It is exactly the same advice which we have been given on Capitol Hill. Economist after economist has come into this building and told us, these are the three things: Help the consumers move forward, do it quickly, and do not do anything that will jeopardize the economy in the long run.

So how do we achieve that? Well, it is very clear to me if we want to move the economy forward and help consumers, we ought to focus on those individuals in our economy who are most likely, with additional resources, to spend them.

My basic course in economics, which I took many years ago at Georgetown,

said people in lower and middle-income groups will spend their money and do it more quickly, and they are more likely to spend it than those in higher income categories.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent for an additional 10 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Madam President.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Did I hear the Senator request an additional 10 minutes?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. That is correct.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I was seeking recognition and was going to recognize my colleague from Missouri who has to catch an airplane. She needed 5 minutes. I stepped aside for her. I obviously want to accommodate Members and do not intend to object, but what is the order of morning business? Is it 10 minutes?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. It is a 10-minute limitation.

Mr. DURBIN. In response to the Senator from Alaska, I gave the same accommodation to his colleague who just left, who asked for additional time to speak, but I do not want to keep anyone from catching their plane.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. My concern was to accommodate the Senator from Missouri.

Mr. DURBIN. I want to accommodate my colleague from Missouri, too. I yield 5 minutes to her and then ask for an additional 10 minutes.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I have no objection.

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

The Senator from Missouri.

REVITALIZING THE AMERICAN ECONOMY

Mrs. CARNAHAN. Madam President, I thank my colleague from Alaska and my colleague from Illinois for their kindness this morning.

I add my voice to those who believe we must act quickly to revitalize the American economy. Even before the terrorist attacks, our economy was slowing down. New reports now indicate the unemployment rate is rising, that consumer confidence is low, and that businesses are postponing investments. The convergence of these important indicators spells trouble for us in the months ahead. That is why Congress must act now.

The American people expect us to find solutions. All across America, the fires of patriotism are burning brightly while in the Congress we smolder in indecision. In fact, we in this Congress can learn from the unity and patriotism of the American people. They want us to work together across party lines to do the urgent business of this Nation.

Leading economists in the country have repeatedly told us what needs to be done. We can jump-start our sluggish economy, we are told, by providing immediate tax relief and economic assistance targeted to those who are most likely to invest and spend. These economists have also warned us that if we abandon fiscal discipline, long-term interest rates will rise. It is time for us to heed their sensible advice.

The Democratic and Republican leaders of the Budget Committee in both the House and the Senate have laid out very useful principles for an effective stimulus package. They all agree the legislation ought to be immediate, it should be temporary, and it should be focused on individuals and businesses most likely to spend the stimulus dollars. I believe if we abide by these bipartisan principles, we can craft a stimulus package that would give a boost to the American economy, and we can do that without jeopardizing our long-term fiscal health.

Using these guidelines, we can craft a package that will garner support from both parties and one that President Bush can sign quickly. Our goal is to get the Nation back to work again and back to growing again. By getting cash into the hands of businesses, we can create new jobs and new investments in plants and equipment.

A number of promising ideas have been suggested that would provide this needed cash infusion into businesses. It has been proposed that businesses could accelerate the rate at which they depreciate new assets. Doing this would help businesses of all sizes decrease their costs this year and free up investment capital.

For example, let me tell my colleagues about a company in my hometown of Rolla, MO. It is called Brewer Science, Inc. It is a successful and growing company that employs 235 people. It produces the chemicals used in the manufacture of integrated circuits. The proposed increase in allowable deductions would enable this small business to expand faster. Additional cash in this business could be spent on additional research and development, and that is the kind of investment and expansion that will get our economy back on track.

Increasing business investments address only part of the problem. While the economy goes through its natural business cycle, many Americans are facing immediate unemployment. Creating new jobs for these workers is crucial, but it will take some time. In the meanwhile, we must help these families in crisis. Last Friday, the Labor Department released some alarming figures. Seven hundred thousand Americans lost their jobs in October. The unemployment rate surged to 5.4 percent this month. There are now a total of 7.7 million Americans out of work. These are staggering numbers. Families all across America are hurting.

Shortly after September 11, I encouraged my colleagues to act quickly on

behalf of the workers in the airline industry who lost their jobs abruptly. To my great regret, they did not act.

At that time, many in this body claimed it was appropriate to wait. They said we ought to deal with assistance to the unemployed when we consider broader legislation to stimulate the economic recovery. Now almost 8 million Americans are worrying about how they will pay the rent or their mortgage. Millions of American parents have lost their health care insurance, and they are worrying what they will do if a child gets sick. Millions of families are wondering how they will put food on their Thanksgiving table this year. It would be unconscionable to tell these people to wait any longer. Extended unemployment benefits and help with health care coverage must be included in a stimulus package.

By extending unemployment compensation, we will be putting dollars into the hands of people who need the money immediately for their basic needs. The money will be spent quickly, which in turn provides the needed remedy for an ailing economy. We have an opportunity to do the right thing at the right time and for the right reasons. We must act quickly and in a bipartisan fashion. We cannot afford to wait until more people are laid off or more businesses fail. We must not leave our families to struggle without help or without hope.

If we have the will, we can forge a just and reasonable compromise that will ease the pain of this recession. When Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel was asked what was the most important commandment, he replied: Thou shall not sit by idly. That response points up the importance of acting when we have a chance to influence an outcome. During this time of crisis, let it not be said of the U.S. Congress that we sat idly by. Let us act with courage, and let us act now.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. I congratulate my colleague from Missouri. She said in just a few moments exactly what we need to hear as we consider this economic stimulus package.

I believe she has put a finger on it: We are being called on, across America, to rally behind our flag, our President, and our cause, that we should make certain when it comes to the economic stimulus package, we also keep in mind that all America is involved. It is the working families in America paying the payroll taxes into the Social Security trust fund who are funding all we are doing. The money we are spending to defend America against terrorism, the money we are spending to rebuild New York, the money we are spending to help the airline industry, the money we are spending for an economic stimulus all comes out of the Social Security trust fund, and all of that money comes from the payroll workers across America.

When we talk about invigorating this economy and getting it moving forward

again, what a difference in approach we have between the two political parties. On the House side, the Republicans came up with a stimulus package which I am afraid doesn't meet the test of encouraging consumer spending, doing it in a timely fashion, and not damaging the economy. Instead, what the House Republican package came up with was, sadly, a great deal of tax relief for the biggest corporations in America. This is profiteering in the name of patriotism.

Consider for a minute that these corporations would receive rebate checks for 15 years' worth of Federal income tax under the stimulus plan supported by the House of Representatives. IBM would receive \$1.4 billion from the Social Security trust fund; Ford, \$1 billion; General Motors, \$833 million. The list goes on and on. Billions and billions of dollars in corporate relief from the House Republican stimulus plan and precious little or nothing for the workers across America.

We know what will get this economy moving again. Give some money to the people who are having a tough time—having just lost their jobs—to keep their families together, and they will spend it. Of course they will. Give the people who just lost their jobs help in paying for health insurance, and they will use that help because they are as frightened as anyone that family members or their children will not be protected with health insurance. Those are the pillars of the Senate Democratic plan for stimulus: That we help those who have just been laid off, who are facing a difficult time.

We also provide tax rebates for 45 million low-income taxpayers who received no rebate earlier this year. People pay payroll taxes, pay into the Social Security trust fund. This time around, we believe they should receive some tax assistance.

We have business tax cuts, as well—a 10-percent bonus appreciation. I heard from businesses across Illinois: Give us some help in depreciating some of the things we purchase and we will purchase more. That can move the economy forward. It is a sensible plan.

We want to extend unemployment benefits an additional 13 weeks in all 50 States. This is not a radical suggestion. This is the course followed by President Bush's father. In the teeth of a recession, he said: We have to stand by the people who have lost their jobs. In America we have 7.5 million Americans who are out of work. We ought to stand by them and any laid off in the near future. We need to expand coverage to the people who do not receive unemployment insurance today.

We also know when it comes to this health insurance, unless we help people buy health insurance once they have lost a job, they will have none; they are not likely to do so. Just do the math. The average unemployment check is \$230 a week; the average payment for private health insurance when you have lost your job is \$588 a month. It just does not work.

We have quite a contrast between the Republican approach of getting this economy moving forward and the Democratic approach. The Republican approach embodies tax cuts for the wealthy and profitable corporations and nothing for homeland security. I hope I get a moment to get to this issue.

When it comes to tax cuts for the wealthy, by speeding up the rate cuts, the Republican plan would give a new \$16,000-a-year tax break to the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans. Those are people making over \$1 million a year, receiving \$16,000 from the Republican tax stimulus. What a stimulus that is: For citizens making \$1 million a year, we want to give you \$16,000 more. That is not going to put money back into the economy, not nearly as much as helping the economy by giving the money to the average working family, the middle-income family across America.

When we give every millionaire a check from the Treasury for \$16,000, that is money being thrown away that could be used to deal with economic stimulus. That \$16,000 goes right out of the Social Security trust fund. Payroll taxes paid by average workers into the Social Security trust fund are being spent to give a \$16,000-a-year check to the wealthiest people in America—and to do it for 4 years under the Republican plan.

The Republican plan, in addition, with the accelerated tax cuts, costs \$27 billion in 2002—next year—and increases to \$121 billion over 10 years. Remember the advice we receive from people: Don't do anything that will hurt us in the long term. They are going to basically eat up any surplus we have in the future to give tax cuts to the wealthiest people in this country. That makes no sense at all.

HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. DURBIN. I have a limited amount of time and will now reflect on the issue of homeland security. There are two ways to move the economy forward: Tax cuts and spending. The faster way, the more effective and immediate way, is through spending because as we spend on important projects and the money is spent, people are employed to do things important for America.

Senator BYRD of West Virginia and others have offered as part of the stimulus package a \$20 billion package dealing with homeland security. Where would that money go? For example, it would go to law enforcement. In my State of Illinois, my Republican Governor has asked me to help come up with \$20 million so we can have a statewide communications network to deal with any emergencies, any crisis, any act of terrorism. This is money well spent. I want to give the Governor that money, but unless Senator BYRD's package moves forward, it is not likely that will happen.