

Neither one of us got everything we wanted, but we put aside our differences to do what is right for the American people. We came together, Democrat and Republican, and passed a good bill out of the Finance Committee that will help create jobs in America. Trade-related jobs, as everybody knows, pay 15 percent above our national average.

For that compromise, I commend Senator BAUCUS. Now we need to do the same thing in the full Senate. We need to do it, and hopefully do it very quickly. The reason for doing it very quickly is that starting, I believe the date is February 7, there are negotiations following on the new round that was agreed to by the 142 nations of the World Trade Organization last November in Doha, Qatar, a new round, and the negotiations would start next month.

We can start those negotiations without passing this bill, but the President will never be credible in these negotiations with the other 142 nations unless the President has this trade promotion authority. So we need to do this, and hopefully not have the partisan bickering we have had on some legislation, so we can get it done very soon.

Trade promotion authority to the President is not only key to our economic recovery but is also a very important tool which helps us help other nations in the world, especially poorer countries, and maybe was best said by President Kennedy 40 years ago when he said trade, not aid, is the leadership the United States ought to take in the way of helping other nations.

We have been giving aid since then, but the long-term benefit is helping another country to help itself, and the ability for them to sell their goods to us and for us in turn to sell our goods to them is very good. It not only is good economically, but I think it brings about a closeness of people around the world, of different societies, of different nations, so we have a greater prospect for peace. That should not be forgotten as well. Although we always talk about this in economic terms, we ought to think in terms of other things it does as well.

So it helps us help poorer countries in a way that helps them to help themselves. It creates jobs. It helps lift people out of poverty. Poverty is our enemy. Poverty leads people in the wrong path, towards war, political instability, religious fanaticism.

Following World War II, we stabilized Europe through the Marshall Plan and economic development. We won the cold war through our economic strength. Now we are fighting the war on terrorism. We need to keep up strong international economic leadership and bring more nations of the world into democracy and prosperity.

The President's political leadership, as our chief diplomat, does that. He does that through his leadership as our Commander in Chief. Also, the President can do this as our chief trade ne-

gotiator and know that he not only wants political leadership in the United States, he wants the United States to give economic leadership and do it in a way to help other countries help themselves and have long-term economic recovery. Trade helps America do all these things, and trade promotion authority for President Bush is the key. There is really no reason to wait.

The bill has strong bipartisan support. It will pass the Senate by a strong margin. That is why I urge today, as I have in several speeches over the last month, that our distinguished majority leader put trade promotion authority on the floor for a vote in February. There is no reason to wait on trade promotion authority. There is no need to waste time in giving the President the authority he needs to open new markets and create new jobs for the American people.

By passing trade promotion authority early this year, the Senate will help the President spur economic growth and continue our world economic leadership, as well as military and political leadership. We will create new jobs.

In this time of war on terrorism, it seems when a lot of people are pleading, and probably rightly so, that a lot of fanaticism comes when poverty is present, we will help fight terrorism by bringing more nations into democracy and prosperity.

It is time to get the job done. The American people expect no less.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MILLER). The Senator from Oregon, Mr. SMITH.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has up to 10 minutes under the order.

THE UNINSURED

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, we all come back having experienced different things and having heard different messages in our States. But as the Budget Committee took up its duties this morning and began hearing economic reports, it was clear to me on the committee that there is overwhelming bipartisan support for winning the war abroad and for better homeland defense here. Then differences begin to emerge as to how best to strengthen America's economic security. Clearly, the economic stimulus package is a priority for many, and certainly for the State of Oregon which I am privileged to represent. When we list all of those priorities, we wonder what is left to help with the other priorities this Nation has.

I rise to speak of a priority I have, that I began working on in the last session of this Congress, with my colleague, RON WYDEN, the issue of the burgeoning ranks of the uninsured. I rise to talk about that subject.

I stand to say that health insurance is something about which we should all be concerned. Living without health insurance can result in bankruptcy, unnecessary delays in treatment, and, in some tragic circumstances, even death itself. We need to be concerned about it, not just because we all may at some point in our lives become uninsured. We need to be concerned about the uninsured because it is a moral outrage that so many Americans have no health coverage even as they live and work in the wealthiest nation on Earth.

We have heard the statistics: Over 40 million Americans do not have health insurance. We have heard the number so many times that it seems to have lost its impact, in this place at least. Let's look at the number more closely: 40 million Americans is one in six people in our country who do not qualify for Medicare. That number includes citizens from every conceivable walk of life: children, pregnant women, parents, single adults, full-time workers, self-employed individuals, and students. The 40 million people include those who have lost their jobs as the economy has worsened. It includes people who have worked hard for small companies that cannot afford to offer health benefits to employees. It includes people who work for companies that offer health benefits, but who cannot afford their share of the premium. Most Americans would be surprised to know more than 80 percent of all uninsured children and adults live in families who have at least one adult working.

This week the country celebrated the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. More than 30 years after his death, it seems incredible that the racial disparity in health care is still so evident. More than any other group, the people who are living without health insurance in the United States are Hispanic and African American. Thirty-two percent of all Hispanics in this country had no health insurance coverage last year; the number is even worse for low-income Hispanics, 43 percent of whom live without insurance. This situation should no longer be tolerated.

As the Senate convenes for the second session of the 107th Congress, there has never been a better time to address the issues of the uninsured. Americans are losing their jobs as the recession continues, without the benefit of any economic stimulus legislation from this Congress.

In addition, the brief era of stability in health insurance premiums seem to have ended. In 2001, the average cost of employer-sponsored health insurance coverage rose 11 percent. Those who work in small firms saw increases substantially higher than that.

There can be no doubt what will happen this year. It has already begun. Through no fault of their own, many employers will have to raise copayments and premiums, while reducing

benefits, if they are able to continue to offer insurance to their employees at all. The bottom line is that more people than ever will lose their health insurance.

These numbers are truly startling. But behind every one of those, every single case of those 40 million people, there is an American face and a human story.

As I travel around Oregon visiting community health centers, I meet more and more people who live without health insurance. I hear their stories. There are many ways we can help shrink that gap between the insured and the uninsured. We should pursue that goal with the policy we begin formulating in the Budget Committee.

While the stories of all of the people I meet are different, they are, in most cases, quite tragic, and the circumstances that have brought them to these places are often similar. The loss of a job. An increase in insurance premiums. A serious illness. These are unavoidable circumstances that could happen to any American.

While I understand the looming budget deficit this year will make new initiatives difficult, the current economic climate is all the more reason to focus attention and resources on covering the uninsured this year. In the immortal word of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "The time is always right to do what is right."

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

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

AGENDA FOR THE SECOND SESSION OF THE 107TH CONGRESS

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I came to this Chamber just as we opened the session to welcome back our colleagues and staff and all of those who are so much a part of this great institution. I reiterate that welcome again this afternoon. I am sure we all hope this new year and this new session will be constructive and productive.

Much has happened in the weeks since we adjourned. In the war on terrorism, President Bush and his national security team continue to do a superb job. And our men and women in uniform continue to inspire us with their heroism and their success.

Closer to home, workers in New York continue to clear away the wreckage at ground zero. At the Pentagon, rebuilding is already underway.

In Princeton, NJ, a tiny 15-day-old baby girl—the daughter of Scott and Lisa Beamer—is living proof that the spirit of the heroes of United flight 93 will never die.

And just yesterday—more than 3 months after the largest bioterrorism

attack in our Nation's history forced it shut—the Hart Senate Office Building finally reopened.

Those are all reasons to be hopeful about this new year. But there are also reasons to be concerned. In all, there are now more than 8.3 million Americans who want to work but do not have jobs. The collapse of Enron has cost thousands of Enron employees their jobs—and their retirement savings. Tens of thousands of other Americans who have invested part of their retirement savings in pension funds have also been hurt by Enron's implosion.

In South Dakota and all across America, people are working hard to raise their children, pay their bills, and maybe, if they are lucky, to put something away for the future. Our job this year is to help them, by strengthening our national security, our economic security, and the security of our democratic institutions.

As we begin this new session, we face two significant challenges. The first is fiscal. Last year, the Congressional Budget Office estimated the Federal Government would run a \$5.6 trillion surplus over the next decade. This morning the CBO released new reports showing that \$4 trillion of the projected surplus has disappeared in the space of just 7 months.

Instead of surpluses every year from now until 2011, current projections indicate that even if you include the Social Security and Medicare surpluses, the Government will run deficits at least in the years 2002 and 2003. And it will be forced to use \$1.2 trillion in Social Security and Medicare trust funds over the next decade to pay for other essential Government programs. That is before we add one penny for the Medicare prescription drug benefit or strengthen our military or increase our investments in homeland security, education, or other critical priorities. It is also before we add one penny for an economic recovery package.

The second challenge we face is ideological. There are some who predict we will accomplish little this year because of our genuine differences in philosophy on many issues and because this session is so short and the stakes in the November elections are so high. But we do not have to accept that prediction. Important issues do not have to be insoluble. The new education bill we passed last year is proof of that.

Six days from today President Bush will deliver his first State of the Union Address. Six days after that, he will send the Congress his budget proposal. Democrats will give the President's proposals very careful and respectful consideration. He deserves every aspect of respect and care that we can give his budget.

Today I would like to say a few words about what we see as our priorities for the coming year. And I might say that we look forward to working with the President and with our Republican colleagues to find principled compromises on each of them.

The first thing we need to do is finish our work from last year. We should start by passing an economic recovery plan that will create jobs and get America's economy moving in the right direction again.

Both the Democratic and Republican economic recovery plans are more than 75 percent tax cuts.

Over the holidays, the Congressional Budget Office analyzed all of the major economic recovery proposals and indicated that the least helpful would be repealing the corporate alternative minimum tax and speeding up the income tax rate reductions passed last summer.

Earlier this month, in an effort to get the negotiations moving again, I proposed two new business tax cuts for every company in America that creates new jobs or invests in new equipment and technology. But today, I offer another proposal for breaking the impasse.

There are four ideas that appear in every major economic plan—Democratic and Republican. The first is to extend unemployment benefits by 13 weeks. Republicans and Democrats have suggested that.

The second is to provide tax rebates for workers who did not get a rebate the first time. Again, both Republicans and Democrats have offered that.

The third is to provide bonus depreciation to encourage business investment. Again, both groups have proposed that.

And finally, the fourth is to provide fiscal relief for States to help them avoid cutting critical services—especially health care—or raising taxes during the recession.

I hope we can at least take up these four measures immediately. If there are others for which there can be agreement—perhaps New York assistance, perhaps the extenders, perhaps other issues—where we can find common ground, I would like to be able to do that. I hope we can do it this week.

I have begun talking with Senator LOTT, and he has been extremely responsive in his desire to try to find a way to move this legislation along. I commend him and thank him for that.

Later on this afternoon we will offer a unanimous consent request that will accommodate Senators' wishes to offer amendments but also, I hope, Senators' desires to get something done. So I am hopeful we can accomplish that this week.

I might add, we have a very limited period of time. We have a couple of days this week. And because of agreed-to schedules, we only have a couple of days next week. And then we have just 2 weeks after that before the Founders' Day recess. In that period of time it would be my hope we could do the economic recovery, the election reform, the farm bill, and an energy bill as well.

That is a lot to do, but if we can make every day count—beginning with this one—I think we can do it. I am