

People are hiring and manufacturing orders are up. All the economic indexes we see in virtually every category are up, including the payroll survey for the last 3 months, and we expect to have fairly good employment numbers coming out tomorrow. The jobless claims that came out today were the lowest level we have seen since the year 2000, again, another good piece of economic news.

That is why I think it is the right thing to do, to not further extend the temporary extended unemployment benefits program. It already expired in March.

We have heard a lot from the other side of the aisle about deficits and how much of a threat deficits are to the current economy and the future economy of the United States. I agree with that. In fact I, by the National Taxpayers Union, was rated No. 1 as the biggest deficit hawk in the Senate. I am very concerned with deficits. My votes match my rhetoric.

Extending the unemployment insurance benefits cost \$1 billion a month, which is added to the deficit. That is deficit spending. A few of the proposals we have heard from the other side would make it a \$2 billion-a-month program. So if people care about the deficit, if they believe that it is something we should not be adding on to, as the Senator from Washington is trying to do by adding back in the extension of the unemployment benefits, then they should not support her amendment.

To sum this up, the facts are, the economy is growing, and growing strongly. Yes, we can do better. I will admit that. I want to see us do more. Pass the JOBS bill that is in front of the Senate today that the Senator from Montana, the ranking member on the Finance Committee, and the Senator from Iowa, the chairman of the committee, have put together. They put together a bill that will create jobs in America. That is part of doing better. There are many other things we can do.

I believe it would actually do harm to the economy, by adding \$1 billion a month to the deficit and discouraging those people who are currently on unemployment, if we were to continue extending the TEUC program for weeks and weeks, and months, instead of giving people the incentive to go out and find the jobs that are being created in America.

I yield the floor and yield the remainder of my time.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

## NOMINATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, earlier today, during the Negroponte debate, a number of my friends from the other side of the aisle expressed concern that some ambassadors were pending on the Executive Calendar. I think concern is a very light word. I think we could use words such as they expressed outrage—concern. I wish to comment on this because I think it was misguided. Perhaps they didn't have the right information.

One of the most unfortunate charges I heard was that the Democrats have ensured that there were vacancies in U.S. Embassies in countries representing 700 million people.

Another unfortunate charge was that we were hamstringing the war on terrorism by not having confirmed ambassadors that the Foreign Relations Committee just found time to report out last week.

Again, we were criticized because we were hamstringing the war on terrorism because, after action taken by the committee last week, we didn't do floor action within the next few days. I think anyone who understands Senate procedure knows acting on work of a committee within a very short period of time doesn't happen very often. What I mean by that is a matter of weeks.

I hope if these Senators think these people were needed so urgently, the Foreign Relations Committee should have moved a little faster—or a lot faster.

But this really is not the issue, because all my colleagues know the record does not support these accusations—and that is what they are. Later tonight we will confirm 20 ambassadors. We have already voted for Ambassador Negroponte. His nomination was completed with nearly record speed, given he was only nominated by President Bush last week.

As to the charge the Democrats have kept several American Embassies vacant, we have been told there are 10 embassies the State Department has said are currently vacant. Of these 10, the President has chosen to fill only 5 of them. Out of 10, half of those the President has not sent names.

Tonight, we will confirm ambassadors to fill Nigeria and Serbia. The only reason we have Serbia tonight is last week Republicans objected to confirming this qualified Foreign Service officer. We also wanted to confirm the new Ambassador to Nepal tonight, but there was an objection, I am told, by our Republican friends that would prevent the Senate from ensuring that this very qualified career Foreign Service officer will not be confirmed. The remaining two vacancies, Sweden and Finland, need to be filled, of course. These are going to be political appointees because they did not fill out the term they committed to serve.

The facts that were propounded by my friends on the other side of the aisle about ambassadors not being ap-

pointed simply is without any basis of fact. We will confirm two tonight. We have 10 that are unfilled. The President has not even sent five of the names to us. I repeat: Two of them we are going to fill tonight. We have five vacancies. A third we will fill tonight, we would not have needed to do that but for an objection by the Republicans last week over that very qualified person. Then, of course, I indicated the person to go to Nepal is being objected to by the Republicans also.

We have two vacancies, then: Sweden and Finland. The reason those are vacant is because they were political appointees and the people decided they wanted to come home early.

We are doing the very best we can. There are a lot of places that people could place blame, but certainly not in the case of appointment of ambassadors because the facts do not support the allegations that we have been slowing up the ambassadors.

I am happy to see the two managers of the bill in the Senate. We are cautiously optimistic we will be able to complete in the near future the very important FSC bill, the JOBS bill. While the two Senators are in the Senate, I say publicly how much I appreciate their work on this piece of legislation. This committee they are responsible for running, the Finance Committee, is as important if not more important than any other committee in the Congress. They work well together. This is a very complicated bill. There have been a lot of political sideshows that have gone on during the pendency of this legislation, as happens in all complex bills. We might get lucky later tonight and work out an arrangement to complete this bill in the near future, probably early next week.

Again, I express my appreciation to the two Senators. They are both experienced. Both come from relatively sparsely populated States, like the State of Nevada. The Founding Fathers set up the Constitution so that the Senate was not determined by how many people are in a State but, rather, that it is a State. There is no better example of what the Founding Fathers had in mind than these two fine men who run this most important committee. I express my appreciation for the good work they do and have done on this bill.

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

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

## EXTENSION OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I am rising this evening in support of S.

1637. This is legislation, sponsored by Senator CANTWELL and myself, to extend the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation Program for another 6 months. The TEUC Program provides additional unemployment compensation benefits to individuals who have exhausted their initial eligibility without finding new employment. It covers those individuals who may find themselves out of a job, once it takes effect.

This program is absolutely critical to thousands of people in the United States of America, many of them who live in my home State of Ohio. The Congressional Budget Office recently reported that for the past 2 years, the exhaustion rate for unemployment benefits has been higher than at any time in recent history. During calendar year 2003, 43 percent of UI recipients exhausted their entitlement to regular benefits.

This is best depicted by this chart that I have here this evening. The bottom line shows the unemployment from a period of 1972 up to 2004. The top line shows the exhaustion rate of benefits. You can see during this period of time we had exhaustion in benefits, then it goes down, then we come out to the 2003-2004 area and you can see that means these people have been unemployed for a much longer period than is traditional in a recessionary period.

Many of those out there today are still in great need. They need these unemployment benefits in order to keep going, paying their mortgages, and giving them some time so they can gain new skills for the jobs that we hope are going to be available to them.

In my own State of Ohio, over 31,000 individuals have exhausted their unemployment benefits since the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation Program ended in late December. Without additional assistance, these families face severe financial difficulties until they are able to regain employment.

Many of my colleagues believe the recent declines in overall unemployment and the continuing decline in initial unemployment claims indicate there is no further need for a TEUC. Nothing could be further from the truth. As CBO's recent report indicates, long-term unemployment has actually continued to increase, even though short-term unemployment has been declining.

Part of the problem we face is that many of our assumptions regarding recessions, economic recovery, and job creation are more suited for the 1950s than the 21st century. Traditional economic analysis tells us companies lay off workers during a recession and rehire them to the same jobs during a recovery. Workers may have collected unemployment during a limited period of time, but they have not lost a job and usually return to their former workplace with no need to seek new employment.

Unfortunately, the current recession has not followed this pattern. Instead

of existing companies laying off employees and later rehiring them, many corporations have permanently eliminated positions or even gone out of business. This has particularly been hurtful in the State of Ohio, where manufacturing has been hit by international competition, litigation costs, and high energy costs. We have lost some 17.5 percent of our manufacturing jobs in the State of Ohio.

Companies like Rubbermaid, in Wayne County, Worchester, OH, one of the most successful companies that Ohio has ever had, a company that was written up in *Fortune* magazine, just closed down—1,200 jobs, in Worchester, OH, a small Ohio city in a small county, Wayne County. Thankfully, new companies and new types of jobs are emerging to replace those that are lost; however, many of the workers who were displaced during the recession have difficulty qualifying for these new jobs. Usually they have to retrain and it is not uncommon they have to relocate. Quite often, middle-aged factory workers find themselves competing with younger, better educated workers for jobs in the technology sector.

Also, many times jobs are lost in older urban communities, but the replacement technology or service sector jobs are created in distant suburban areas that require long commutes or changing residences. Families who are dependent on two incomes may find it difficult to locate employment for both wage earners at the same location. Consequently, either the husband or the wife may be unemployed for much longer than in previous recessions.

This is precisely the situation we are facing in Ohio. We have lost manufacturing jobs in older communities such as Youngstown and Cleveland and southeast Ohio. Most of these job losses reflect plant closings or permanent downsizing. These jobs are gone and they are not coming back. They are gone. They are finished.

Meanwhile, some areas of the State are picking up service sector jobs and have unemployment rates as low as 3.9 percent. Unfortunately, expanded financial service jobs in suburban Columbus are not much help to an unemployed tool and die maker in Toledo, OH. It is all very well to talk about the bright new economy that will generate plentiful employment at high wages for the knowledge workers of the future. However, we still have a responsibility to assist the semiskilled manual laborers being displaced by the demise of the old manufacturing economy. Many of these workers can and will retrain. Some will, however reluctantly, relocate. All of them will require time to make these changes.

Recently, Chairman Greenspan has recognized the need to extend temporary unemployment benefits. Secretary Snow has recognized the need to extend temporary unemployment benefits. Our President recognizes that we need to extend temporary unemployment benefits. It is time for Congress to extend these benefits.

The program was designed specifically to give long-term unemployed individuals the time they need to readjust to changing economic realities. The recent report from the CBO clearly indicates the continued need for this program. Consequently, I call upon my colleagues to offer a helping hand to workers from that old economy, while we welcome the rise of the new economy. We can afford to help with this transition, and it is the right thing to do.

I know there are many of my colleagues from States that do not have the problem we have in my State, and they don't understand the urgency of the passage of this legislation. I think we owe it to these people, to these families. Some of them live in my neighborhood in the city of Cleveland. I have lived in the same house since I was mayor of the city of Cleveland, since 1972. I live in a middle-class neighborhood. I have a neighbor across the street who has been unemployed and his benefits have been exhausted. He needs help. I see these people in the grocery store and they talk to me about it.

I think some of our colleagues who are opposed come from States where things are fine, things are wonderful. But I think part of the responsibility we have as Senators in the United States of America is to look after the needs of the entire country. If I were in a position where things were wonderful in my State and they weren't good in some other State and they needed some help in unemployment, then I would be supportive of that because I think it is the proper thing for us to do.

The other thing about this program that a lot of my colleagues do not understand is that, even though this money is coming from the Federal Treasury, the money ultimately is repaid back to the Treasury from the unemployment compensation fund that is supported by a tax on our businesses in our State. This happened when we had the last recession in the State of Ohio.

I am urging my colleagues to open their eyes to the pleas and the needs of so many of our fellow Americans who need that extra help at this time for themselves and for their families.

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

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

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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