

way Members of Congress get their insurance, and Americans should have the same choice.

Increased competition and transparency do not sound like a government takeover to me. Rather, it sounds like the markets acting in a way that best serves the American people.

My health reform reality check is that health care reform is consumer based and market driven. You can keep your insurance if you like it. It will increase choices for families. It will promote competition.

We need to move past the rhetoric and the myths. We need to rise to the occasion in this pivotal moment in our Nation's history. We must pass meaningful health reform for the citizens of New Hampshire and all Americans.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I wish to thank the Senator from New Hampshire for closing in such a perfect way today. I agree with her that for far too long Washington special interest politics has gotten in the way of fixing this system, and the result has been enormously unfortunate for working families all across the United States of America.

When your median family income is going down by \$300 over a decade, and the cost of health insurance is doubling over the same period of time—by the way, in my State, it has gone down by \$800—and the cost of insurance has gone up 97 percent, the cost of higher education has gone up by 50 percent over the same period of time, essentially what we are saying to working families is: You are going to take home less, but you have to pay more for, not “nice to haves” but things that are critical to move your family ahead to have the kind of stability that is essential for everybody to have a shot at the American dream, and for some reason we in Washington cannot figure out how to make some changes that would help working families and small businesses all across the United States.

That moment has come now, and we are here. We have the next few weeks to figure this out. I believe we will. I am enormously optimistic we can pass a bill in this Senate and in the Congress that the President can sign that will make a material impact, an improvement in the lives of working families and those employed by small businesses all over this country. In fact, anything less than that should be unacceptable to all of us.

I hope we can do that in a bipartisan way. I hope we can have cooperation across the aisle and the best ideas from both parties as we design it. But, to me, the most important thing is to make sure people who live in my State do not need to endure another decade of double-digit cost increases every single year, do not need to endure another decade where they lose their health insurance because they lose a job or because they have a preexisting condition or because, as happened in my State last week, a baby was born who was

deemed to be too heavy to insure—fortunately, the insurance company did the right thing in the end—to not have another decade where people are wrestling with their insurers to get paid, so that doctors and people providing health care do not have to spend 30 percent of their overhead or more trying to get reimbursed for services they provided to their patients.

I am optimistic in part because of all my wonderful colleagues who were here this morning. I thank them for joining me today.

Mr. President, with that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak as in morning business.

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

UNEMPLOYMENT EXTENSION

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act. This bill will extend at least 14 weeks of unemployment benefits to workers across the country who will exhaust their benefits by the end of the year.

This the second time I have come to the floor to urge those who are holding up this critical legislation to stop blocking its passage.

This week we learned that Wall Street firms are expected to pay out a record \$140 billion in compensation. While the economy seems to have turned around for Wall Street executives, it sure hasn't turned around for millions of American workers who still can't find a job.

If we can bail out the big banks that got us into this financial mess, shouldn't this Senate be able to act quickly to help the people hit hardest by this recession—unemployed workers?

Apparently not, because there are Members of this Senate who are playing partisan political games and delaying an extension of unemployment benefits. This needs to stop.

Today, more 5 million workers have been unemployed for 6 months or longer. Through no fault of their own, millions of Americans cannot find work because there are now more than 6 unemployed workers for each job opening. Until the job market improves, we have a responsibility to help these workers keep food on the table and pay the mortgage.

Not only is this the right thing to do for families, it is the right investment to make in our economy. An effective

stimulus is timely, targeted and temporary, and that's how this extension is designed.

This extension is temporary. It is targeted at those who have been unemployed for more than 59 weeks and have exhausted their benefits. And no one can question that it is timely.

Unemployment compensation is money that gets spent immediately on necessities. People who are out of work need this money to help pay rent and mortgages, buy food, and pay for gas.

So when we extend unemployment benefits, we are not just helping workers who have lost their jobs, we are helping small businesses across the country by boosting demand for their products and services.

In fact, economists say that dollar-for-dollar, extending unemployment benefits is one of the most cost effective actions we can take to stimulate the economy.

Temporary extensions of unemployment benefits are an especially effective stimulus when the long-term unemployment rate is high, and, unfortunately, that is the situation today. Nationally, the number of long-term unemployed—those jobless for 27 weeks or more—rose to 5.4 million in September. In my home State, New Hampshire, the number of long-term unemployed has more than tripled in the past year.

I do not understand why any Senator would delay an extension of unemployment compensation that will help workers and small businesses in every single State.

People are counting on us to act now. American workers who have exhausted unemployment benefits cannot wait another week to pay the rent or buy groceries.

I urge my colleagues to stop the games and pass this critical extension without further delay.

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

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I have the honor of chairing the United States Helsinki Commission, representing the Senate. The Helsinki Commission is the U.S. participation in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Fifty-six countries representing Europe, Central Asia, Canada, and the United States got together in 1975 in order to further advancements in security, in human rights, and in economics.

We had our full meeting in Athens this past weekend, and the center subject for that meeting was climate change and the need for the international community to come together to enact meaningful goals for reducing greenhouse gases and carbon emissions. It was clear, from the urgency of this mission, that we need to act now; that the circumstances of floods and droughts in so many parts of the world are causing immediate concern. We now have what is known as climate migrants—people who are forced to leave their countries because of the impact of global climate change. This is causing serious concerns in many parts of the world in regard to stability and security, which affects U.S. interests.

I know each of us in our own States can give our own examples of the impact of climate change. In my State of Maryland, the residents of Smith Island understand that their island is disappearing during their lifetime because of sea level changes, due in part to global climate change. The watermen in Maryland know their livelihood is being jeopardized because of the warming of the Chesapeake Bay, affecting sea grasses, which affects the ability of the blue crab to survive. So we all know the immediate impact.

But in Athens it became apparent to the international community that we need to act now. We need to act now for the sake of our security, we need to act now because of the economic imperative, and we need to act now because of the environmental risk. The good news is it was apparent to all of us that there is a common solution. If we deal with our energy issues, we can solve all three of those problems.

We can strengthen our economies, particularly in these difficult times, by creating good new jobs; we can deal with international security threats, when one nation threatens to cut off its oil or gas to another country; or the fact that so many places in the world that have the mineral wealth have values that are different than our values and we are actually helping to support their values; and for the environmental need of making sure that we deal with global climate change in future generations and we work together.

The question that was asked at this meeting was: Where is the United States? Where is the leadership from the strongest Nation in the world? Well, my reply was: The United States is back. We are ready to assume international leadership on global climate change issues.

The Obama administration has already taken action. They have taken action on CAFE standards for automobiles. They have taken action through the Environmental Protection Agency. It is clear that we are ready to act. The House of Representatives has already passed legislation, and Senator KERRY and Senator BOXER have brought forward the Clean Energy Jobs and the American Power Act, and I am proud to be part of that effort and that

legislation. That legislation builds on the work done in the last Congress with Senator LIEBERMAN and Senator WARNER, and it is very similar to the bill that has passed the House of Representatives.

What that legislation will do is to re-establish U.S. leadership on international efforts to deal with global climate change. The legislation would establish a 20-percent reduction by the year 2020. That is stronger than in the House bill and it establishes America as a leader. It dedicates investment toward domestic clean energy and 21st century infrastructure by providing the necessary investments in wind and solar. These technologies were developed in the United States and now it is time for us to put that technology to work creating jobs in America and alternative renewable energy sources that will wean us off the need for imported oil.

The legislation also dedicates funds for other types of green transportation, which we know can be very valuable. Green transportation represents 30 percent of our greenhouse gas emissions and 70 percent of our oil. We can do much better. I am personally working very hard to promote additional funding sources for public transportation. You can't help, when you travel to Europe, but know that their models are much stronger than ours in transporting people through public transportation. I happen to represent two of the most congested urban areas in our country—Baltimore and Washington. Both have transit systems that are in need of expansion. By doubling the ridership on public transportation, we can reduce our imported oil by 40 percent alone.

This legislation is friendly toward alternative energy sources and nuclear energy, which has a very favorable carbon footprint. It also creates jobs. We know that we can create four times as many jobs here in America by investing in green energy rather than in oil or gas. Japan also knows that. They have been investing in renewable energy sources. Germany knows that. They are investing today because they know it is good for jobs. China knows that. They are investing today. They are going forward with these programs for alternative and renewable energy sources in wind and solar and many other areas, because they know that is where the competition will be tomorrow, and they are going to be prepared. We also need to be prepared.

The legislation Senator KERRY and Senator BOXER have brought forward protects the consumers, making sure that in our transition we don't add to the cost of the typical consumer in America. It also helps industries that are very dependent today on carbon energy sources. It helps them in transition so they can transition to the new energy of tomorrow. It invests in clean coal. We have plenty of coal, but it emits too much carbon. Well, this bill invests in figuring out how we can use

coal in an environmentally friendly way.

The legislation also deals with our international responsibilities. As a developed nation, we have a responsibility to developing countries. They have already been impacted much more adversely than we due to the impacts of global climate change. We need to strengthen their ability and resolve to protect our forests, to be good stewards of our environment, and to help them deal with development. The bill also provides for wildlife—to preserve wildlife.

One last part about the Kerry-Boxer bill. It is deficit neutral. It will not add any additional debt for future generations. This is truly a bill that my two granddaughters, that all our children and grandchildren will benefit from by having a cleaner environment, a safer country through energy security, good jobs for the future, and all without adding to the deficit.

I reminded my colleagues in Athens that for Copenhagen to be successful, we need to have a bill that sets reasonable targets, absolutely—short term and long term. We have to have the mechanisms that get us to those targets in place in Copenhagen. We also have to have the financing to help the developing countries, and we also have to have enforcement. We have to have enforcement.

What do I mean by that? Well, we are not going to accomplish our goals if the United States does everything it does to reduce carbon emissions but we find other countries don't do that and then they send their products here to America at a cheaper price. That is unfair to U.S. manufacturers and producers, and it doesn't accomplish our international goals of bringing down carbon emissions. So what I have suggested is that in Copenhagen there needs to be a mechanism that says if your country does not meet the international standards, your products are subject to a border adjustment reflective of the cost to bring that product in compliance with international carbon standards. That is fair to the manufacturers in those countries that have met those standards, and it also permits us to make sure that other countries in fact do act to deal with their international responsibilities.

I am optimistic. I am optimistic we are going to be able to achieve these results. The urgency of the issue requires us to act. We have Senator KERRY and Senator BOXER who have brought forward a reasonable bill, and hearings are scheduled before the Environment and Public Works Committee later this month.

Recently Senator KERRY and Senator GRAHAM have gotten together on a blueprint on how we can move forward on global climate change legislation in this Congress, and they bring up two subjects I have already mentioned—the use of nuclear power in America, which clearly needs to be part of the solution, and how we can deal with clean burning coal.

In Copenhagen, in December, we need to achieve the international results that are the strongest in setting these goals and mechanisms in place. I am confident that America will be a leader in Copenhagen, and a leader in bringing forward responsible legislation to deal with energy.

For those who say we should go slow, let me tell you, reviving our economy is intrinsically linked to rethinking how we solve our energy challenges. Investing in new technology creates new jobs. Diversifying our energy sources creates competition, stabilizing and lowering energy prices. And thinking beyond fossil fuel buried in unstable and unreliable countries makes us all more secure. Our dependence on old ways, old patterns, and old resources puts us at a financial and national security disadvantage. Those same fossil fuels we burn to drive our cars, power our homes and heat and treat our water are polluting our air, making our children sick, and raising our planet's temperature. The good news is that in solving our energy security challenge, we can also grow our economy and clean our environment.

But let's remember that any deals we reach in Copenhagen and any laws we pass here are but the beginning. The work must continue with earnest follow-through dedicated to truly changing the way we work and live and move around this Earth.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for up to 5 minutes in morning business, and that I then am followed by the Senator from Michigan, Senator STABENOW.

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

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I rise for two purposes. First, there is a huge argument in America with regard to health care, and we all know one of the main contributing factors to the health difficulties of all Americans is the subject of obesity. There are many opinions about ways to address it, but the most comprehensive way to address it is to be intellectually honest in addressing it.

The President of the Coca-Cola Company was published in an October 8 Wall Street Journal article, and it is a brilliant article on obesity, weight, sugar content, and soft drinks. I commend it to the Senate for their study.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the full article.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, Oct. 8, 2009]

COKE DIDN'T MAKE AMERICA FAT

(By Muhtar Kent)

Obesity is a complex issue, and addressing it is important for all Americans. We at the

Coca-Cola company are committed to working with government and health organizations to implement effective solutions to address this problem.

But a number of public-health advocates have already come up with what they think is the solution: heavy taxes on some routine foods and beverages that they have decided are high in calories. The taxes, the advocates acknowledge are intended to limit consumption of targeted foods and help you to accept the diet that they have determined is best.

In cities and states across America—and even at the federal level—this idea is getting increased attention despite its regressive nature and inherent illogic.

While it is true that since the 1970s Americans have increased their average caloric intake by 12%, they also have become more sedentary. According to the National Center for Health Statistics 2008 Chartbook, 39% of adults in the U.S. are not engaging in leisure physical activity. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has found that 60% of Americans are not regularly active and 25% of Americans are not active at all. The average American spends the equivalent of 60 days a year in front of a television, according to a 2008 A.C. Nielsen study. This same research data show that the average time spent playing video games in the U.S. went up by 25% during the last four years.

If we're genuinely interested in curbing obesity, we need to take a hard look in the mirror and acknowledge that it's not just about calories in. It's also about calories out.

Our industry has become an easy target in this debate. Sugar-sweetened beverages have been singled out for demonization in spite of the fact that soft drinks, energy drinks, sports drinks and sweetened bottled water combined contribute 5.5% of the calories in the average American diet, according to the National Cancer Institute. It's difficult to understand why the beverages we and others provide are being targeted as the primary cause of weight gain when 94.5% of calorie intake comes from other foods and beverages.

Those pushing for this tax lack some essential facts, not to mention some basic common sense. Over the past 20 years, the average caloric content of soft drinks has dropped by nearly 25%. This is due in large part to a determined focus by our company and others on the diet/light category with brands like Diet Coke, Coca-Cola Zero and Powerade Zero. Even soft drinks with sugar, like Coca-Cola, contain no more calories (140 calories in a can) than common snacks, breakfast foods and most desserts served up daily in millions of American homes. And while obesity rates have skyrocketed, sales of regular soft drinks decreased by nearly 10% from 2000 to 2008, according to the industry publication Beverage Digest.

So where are all of the extra calories in the American diet coming from? Research from the United States Department of Agriculture shows that added sugars, as a percentage of total daily available calories, have declined 11% since 1970. Yet the percent of calories from added fats and flour/cereal products has increased 35% and 13%, respectively, during that same time period.

Will a soft drink tax change behavior? Two states currently have a tax on sodas—West Virginia and Arkansas—and they are among the states with the highest rates of obesity in the nation.

Obesity is a serious problem. We know that. And we agree that Americans need to be more active and take greater responsibility for their diets. But are soft drinks the cause? I would submit to you that they are no more so than some other products—and a lot less than many, many others.

As a leader in our industry, we have a role to play in solving this issue. Globally, we have led the industry for nearly 30 years with innovations across the diet and light beverage categories. Today, more than 25% of our global beverage portfolio is comprised of low- or no-calorie beverages.

Policy makers should stop spending their valuable time demonizing an industry that directly employs more than 220,000 people in the U.S., and through supporting industries, an additional three million. Instead, business and government should come together to help encourage greater physical activity and sensible dieting, while allowing Americans to enjoy the simple pleasure of a Coca-Cola.

TRIBUTE TO FURMAN BISHER

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, on Sunday of this past week, an event of journalistic magnitude took place in the city of Atlanta and the State of Georgia. A man by the name of Furman Bisher published his last sports column in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. He typed that column on the same manual Royal typewriter upon which he typed his first column 59 years ago.

Furman Bisher is a distinguished employee of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, a distinguished resident of our city and our State. Unlike many in his profession, he had a profound positive effect on his city and his State and on sports. Furman Bisher started writing in Atlanta, GA when Atlanta's only professional sports team was the Atlanta Crackers, a Double-A team playing in a small bandbox stadium in Ponce de Leon Park. In the 1960s, as his career emerged, he, along with Jesse Adler, were the principal writers of sports in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. He began to be published in other magazines, magazines such as Sports magazine, magazines such as the Sporting News. He developed respect around the United States as a gifted, talented, and honest sports writer.

Had it not been for Furman Bisher, the Atlanta Braves probably would not be in Atlanta, GA because when Mills B. Lane and Mayor Ivan Allen risked what then was a huge amount of money, \$18 million, to build a major league sports stadium without a sports team, it was not until Furman Bisher went and talked to the Bartholomay family who were getting ready to move the Milwaukee Braves from Milwaukee and convinced them to bring major league baseball for the first time ever to the South.

The same was true a few years later when Rankin Smith petitioned to buy the first NFL franchise to exist in the South, and that \$7.5 million purchase happened for a lot of reasons but probably the most important of which was Furman Bisher.

What is so great about Furman is he could make sports come alive, from cricket to football, from boxing to golf. His writing on boxing is historic and his following of Atlanta native Evander Holyfield helped elevate Evander to where he became the Heavyweight Champion of the World. But probably