

I mention that because I put into the RECORD already 130 or more organizations. Every single law enforcement organization of any significance in this country is supporting Eric Holder. Civil rights groups are supporting Eric Holder. Past prosecutors, including those of the Bush and Reagan administrations, have supported Eric Holder. Current prosecutors, the members of the immediate past President, President Bush's administration, have endorsed him.

I say this because I think we are seeing straw men put up here—straw men who are saying they do not want Eric Holder as Attorney General; yet these same people voted unanimously for Alberto Gonzalez, an Attorney General who left in disgrace.

This man restores the lustre of the Department of Justice. This man will be as independent as the Attorney General I talked with in his office when I was a young law student and we were talking about what it would be like to come to the Department of Justice. I asked that Attorney General if he would allow anybody in the White House, up to and including the President, to interfere with any criminal prosecution or civil rights prosecution. He said absolutely not, and I have told the President that. That Attorney General I was talking with was Robert F. Kennedy. He was talking about his brother John F. Kennedy. And when it came time to prosecute a man who had been critical to his brother's election as President of the United States, Robert Kennedy prosecuted him.

I left as a young law student, tempted to stay in Washington, but my wife Marcelle and I went back to Vermont, where we were both born and where we wanted to be. But I have never forgotten that discussion with Attorney General Kennedy. That has been the touchstone for me. I don't want another Attorney General who sits in the room while others in our government approve secretly wiretapping Americans in violation of our law, or engaging in torture. I want an attorney who stands up for the rule of law and our long cherished American values.

That is the kind of Attorney General Eric Holder would be. Come on the right side of history. Come on the right side of history. Reject what we saw in the past. Vote for Eric Holder.

Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Eric H. Holder, Jr., of the District of Columbia, to be Attorney General? On this question, the yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) are necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) would vote "yea."

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 75, nays 21, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 32 Ex.]

YEAS—75

Akaka	Gillibrand	Merkley
Alexander	Graham	Mikulski
Baucus	Grassley	Murkowski
Bayh	Gregg	Murray
Bennet	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Hatch	Pryor
Bond	Inouye	Reed
Boxer	Isakson	Reid
Brown	Johnson	Rockefeller
Burr	Kaufman	Sanders
Byrd	Kerry	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Sessions
Cardin	Kohl	Shaheen
Carper	Kyl	Snowe
Casey	Landrieu	Specter
Chambliss	Lautenberg	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Tester
Conrad	Levin	Udall (CO)
Corker	Lieberman	Udall (NM)
Dodd	Lincoln	Voinovich
Dorgan	Lugar	Warner
Durbin	McCain	Webb
Feingold	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Menendez	Wyden

NAYS—21

Barrasso	Crapo	McConnell
Brownback	DeMint	Risch
Bunning	Ensign	Roberts
Burr	Enzi	Shelby
Coburn	Hutchison	Thune
Cochran	Inhofe	Vitter
Cornyn	Johanns	Wicker

NOT VOTING—3

Begich	Kennedy	Martinez
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The nomination was confirmed.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank all my colleagues who took part in this debate over the past several weeks. It is a historic nomination. And of the last four—I have to check back—the last four attorneys general, Eric Holder had the largest "aye" vote of any of them.

I think it is a good sign for the country. It is a good sign for the Department of Justice. And this former prosecutor is very happy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and tabled. The President shall be notified of the Senate's action and the Senate will return to legislative session.

**THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009—Resumed**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont is recognized.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

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.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are on the economic stimulus package. We are going to start on that early in the morning, 10 o'clock. The first amendment we are going to offer, I have already told the Republican leader, is going to be an amendment offered by Senators MURRAY, FEINSTEIN, and others dealing with infrastructure.

We look forward to the next amendment. If the Republicans are ready, then they should be ready to offer their amendment. We will try to move through the process as quickly and as fairly as we can.

This is an extremely important piece of legislation. The problems we have economically in the country today are not the problems of Democrats or Republicans, they are problems that American people have. We together have to try to work through this bill. I hope we can have cooperation. There are many things that people have different responsibilities for. We have had a longstanding partial-day conference we are going to have, but we are going to have opportunities during the time we are there listening to Secretary Chu and Secretary Salazar and others to offer amendments here.

There will be a significant number of votes. We hope if the amendments are offered tomorrow and Wednesday, we will have a number of votes all day tomorrow. Starting about 3 o'clock Wednesday afternoon we can do the amendments that have been offered that day. So we have lots of work to do, and it is important we do it as quickly, I repeat, and as fairly as we can.

I ask unanimous consent the following be recognized for the time specified: UDALL of New Mexico, 15 minutes; BROWNBACK, 10 minutes; CASEY, 15 minutes; SNOWE, 20 minutes; KAUFMAN, 15 minutes. This request is for these Senators to speak this evening.

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

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, as I rise to give this maiden speech in our Chamber, we all know we are living in very difficult times. Our current economic crisis has only accelerated problems that have been growing for years. America's manufacturing sector was declining before this crisis, and when this crisis has passed, we will still need a blueprint for creating high-paying jobs and growing the middle class.

Meanwhile, our energy policies pose a threat to the economic, environmental, and national security of our Nation and the world. I believe these two problems, our economic stagnation and our energy irresponsibility, demand a common solution. We must put Americans to work building the energy economy of the future, and we must do so now.

I often say our energy policies have produced a perfect storm, a combination of three extraordinary challenges

that collectively threaten our future. First, America's dependence on fossil fuels threatens our economy. As natural gas provides a growing share of America's electricity, the price of gas has more than tripled since 1995, and growing demand promises to make matters worse.

Second, America's energy policies threaten our security. America has 3 percent of the world's natural gas reserves, but we consume 25 percent of the world's supply. That increasingly means sending American dollars to Russia and Iran, two countries that sit on more than 43 percent of the world's gas reserves and two countries that have shown their willingness to use energy as an instrument of coercion.

Finally, humans have managed to overwhelm the Earth's carbon cycle. The balance that sustained life on Earth for millennia has been radically altered. In New Mexico, this means fewer farms and more forest fires, more thirst and less water, the end of a unique and treasured way of life.

Some people say the world's demand for fossil fuels has not yet begun to outstrip supply, or that the climate is not changing back that quickly. I look at it this way. We are driving toward the cliff. I do not want to spend a lot of time arguing about how far off the cliff is. I want to stop accelerating.

So what do we do? In the short term, we need to do it all. We need to drill responsibly for domestic energy, we should promote conservation, and nuclear power has to be part of the mix.

But we also need reforms to prepare us for the future. When I was in the other body, I fought for and we passed a renewable electricity standard, an RES. This plan would demand that large utilities generate a portion of their energy from renewable sources and conservation. Thanks in large part to my colleague who is on the floor today, the senior Senator from New Mexico, Mr. BINGAMAN, the Senate has passed this proposal three times. Similar policies have succeeded at the State level. In fact, 28 States have renewable standards, including my home State of New Mexico. But a national RES has never become the law of the land. It is time for Congress to make it so.

There are many reasons to support this plan. To start, it is good for consumers. With a 20-percent standard, utility customers could save \$31.8 billion. It will strengthen rural communities and provide new income for farmers and ranchers. This plan will make America safer. The billions of dollars it would generate are dollars that will stay in America and cannot be used to hold our foreign policy hostage. But most importantly, a national renewable standard will create hundreds of thousands of high-paying jobs, jobs that cannot be outsourced. Study after study shows that shifting capital to renewable energy increases job creation.

Not only will this plan stimulate job creation today, it will put us on a path

toward dominance in the industries of the future. These benefits will come from the actions of private businesses making the RES a distinctly American solution to a global problem. That is why it will succeed. As one writer has put it, the only thing stronger than Mother Nature is "father profit."

Because it works with the private sector, an RES is more than a government program. It is an appeal to the spirit of innovation. I know we have enough of that innovative spirit to tackle any challenge we face. I see it in the people of New Mexico. I see it in the scientists chasing new ideas, in entrepreneurs betting their time and capital on the hope of a better world, in engineers searching blueprint sketches for the submerged outline of a revolution. My constituents are eager to tackle the problems that face our country. I know yours are too. But these citizens have been poorly served by their Government. Just last month, a renewable energy company from my State was forced to lay off most of its workforce. After investing in a new technology, the company could not afford to begin manufacturing. As a result, the progress of their innovations has been delayed, and the dreams of their workers have been deferred.

It did not have to be this way. Countries that have done more to shape their energy markets have created driving green energy industries. With a population roughly a quarter as large as America's, Germany has twice as many workers developing wind energy technologies. Spain has almost 5 times as many workers in the solar thermal industry as America, and China has more than 300 times.

Today our markets do not accurately price the social cost of burning fossil fuels. As a result, the private sector is effectively being told to send American dollars overseas, to ignore the coming decline in fossil fuel supplies, and to radically alter the world's climate. It is a credit to America's energy companies that so many of them have invested in alternative fuels and conservation. But individual acts of responsibility cannot compensate for a market that encourages irresponsibility. If we are going to make the changes we need, conservation cannot be an act of personal virtue, and renewable fuels cannot be luxury alternatives. An RES would structure the marketplace so those decisions that are best for the American people are also the best for the bottom line. This approach will make the market a powerful force for progress because Government cannot tackle this problem alone.

New Mexico contains two of America's preeminent national labs. We know these public institutions have an incredible innovative capacity, but we also know Government needs private sector partners to achieve its goals. From 1970 to 1996, Los Alamos National Lab, the institution that harnessed the power of the atom and launched America's national lab system, developed a

technique for cleanly and efficiently using the Earth's heat to generate energy. Estimates indicated that the technique could eventually power the Earth for hundreds of years. But without market incentives to encourage continued development, progress stagnated.

Only recently have American businesses rediscovered the geothermal technologies this country pioneered. Because our markets do not appropriately value renewable energy, we lost more than a decade while the world raced ahead. America cannot afford to let another country become the world's green energy leader. Someday soon, green energy will no longer be an alternative; it will be the standard. The CEO of GE Energy recently testified before Congress that wind and solar energy are likely to be among the largest sources of new manufacturing jobs worldwide during the 21st century. The question is whether these jobs will be in America. That is what I want, and that is what we need to do.

America has always succeeded by being one step ahead. We mass produced the car, and American manufacturing built the middle class. We sparked the IT revolution, and our high-tech industry fueled American prosperity for years. Today being one step ahead means developing the green energy economy of the future before anybody else does. The challenge is huge but so is the payoff if we succeed—a stronger economy, a more secure future, and a chance to reclaim the mantle of world leadership by the force of our example and the unmatched capacity of our people. It is clear these are difficult times. I devoted this speech to a proposal I believe will allow us to meet these difficulties head on and to emerge a safer, stronger, more prosperous Nation. I believe the American people are ready for change, and they are ready for the change this plan represents. It is up to us to rise to the challenge.

Should we do so—and I am confident we will—we will remember today as a time when America again turned a global threat into a national opportunity. We will remember the day when our Government set free the power of American industry to tackle one of the world's toughest problems, and we will celebrate the time when American businesses and American workers rose and together rebuilt a newer world, a clean energy world.

I also wish to thank today a number of my colleagues and friends: My cousin, MARK UDALL, from the great State of Colorado; Senator BINGAMAN, whom I mentioned, who has been a leader on these renewable technologies and has gotten this proposal that I talked about today through the Senate three times. I see JEANNE SHAHEEN, who is also in my class; JEFF MERKLEY, DEBBIE STABENOW, SHERROD BROWN, BOB CASEY, many Members who are here. I am grateful.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under a previous order, the Senator from Kansas is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. BROWNBACK. I welcome my colleague from New Mexico, Senator UDALL, a great name in U.S. politics. I am sure he will do a great job in this body, and I appreciate his comments talking about green expansion and what we can do to create jobs and opportunities. We certainly need to do that, and I welcome him.

I rise to speak on the stimulus bill in front of us. Our economy is certainly in great difficulty. The American people are suffering. Look at the numbers. They don't tell what is in people's hearts or what is happening to their pocketbooks, but it does paint a bleak picture. Real gross domestic product declined 3.8 percent in the fourth quarter this past year. Consumer spending, which is nearly 70 percent of the economy, was down 3.5 percent. We had weak consumer spending, weak exports, weak investment. That translates into a bad job market. I don't think anybody questions but that we are in difficult economic times.

For the past 12 months, the economy has lost nearly 2.6 million payroll jobs. From Friday's forecast, the estimates ahead are looking at another 500,000-plus jobs lost during the month of January. Ouch. That is bad. It is hard. It is difficult. The economy is in very difficult shape, and people are suffering.

I wish to see President Obama succeed in helping to move the economy forward. I wish to see Congress be a constructive part of the process. I believe we can do both. If we could slow down a little bit and work together, we could come up with an economic stimulus package that could get 80 votes out of this body. Unfortunately, the bill in front of us is neither prudent nor responsible. I don't think it is going to get us out of the hole we are in. It just digs the hole deeper. There is an old saying that if you are in a hole, stop digging. Unfortunately, the bill we are considering resembles too much the one that passed the House of Representatives, ignores that advice, and supplies bigger shovels to dig the hole deeper and faster. That is not the way we should go.

My hope and prayer for this week is that we will work as a body; if we can't work as a body and work together to fashion something on a bipartisan basis that actually stimulates the economy, that we simply send this back to the committee to start over again. I am on the Appropriations Committee. We got the bill on our side 24 hours ahead of voting on it in committee. The committee held no hearings on this bill whatsoever. We voted within 1 hour 40 minutes to appropriate and spend \$350 billion, basically creating another fiscal year between 2009 and 2010 and then pouring a wad of money into a number of different segments without rhyme or reason for how it would stimulate the economy. That is what gets everybody so upset about this bill. It is spending

a lot of money, and it is not going to stimulate the economy.

This notion about what we want to do is just get a lot of money out the door or maybe use a crisis to spend money in places that people wanted to do for some time may be more of what is at stake. The White House Chief of Staff, Rahm Emanuel, stated:

You never want a serious crisis to go to waste. What I mean by that is an opportunity to do things that you think you could not do before.

Unfortunately, what I think is in this package is too much of that idea, that we have a crisis, let's use this crisis to put a lot of money into different places that we wanted to all along to get it out the door and get it passed. You can do it that way, but that doesn't stimulate the economy. That stimulates the Government and Government spending and expands the Government to the point that some economists are looking at the Federal Government becoming 30 percent of the economy, where normally we run at about 20 percent of the economy. You are looking at doing that on a permanent basis. We cannot afford that. We particularly cannot afford that, given the first wave of the baby boomers who retire in large measure by 2012. Three years from now, you start hitting that big pool of retirees getting Medicare and Social Security instead of paying into it. At the same time, you have ratcheted up your size of Government under this crisis mode to the point that you could get a mammoth sized Federal Government that cannot be sustained on the backs of taxpayers, under the idea of you don't want to waste a good crisis, you want to use it to spend in areas that you wish you could have all along.

What these packages deliver, unfortunately, is an increasing amount of debt and a plethora of big Government spending increases masquerading as a fiscal stimulus. It is a grab bag of different spending programs with the hope that it would somehow chase the recession away. Instead, it adds to the debt. This bill will cost American taxpayers close to \$900 billion. That is on top of an already projected deficit of \$1.2 trillion.

It is also interesting that when President Clinton came into office, he put forward an economic stimulus package that was defeated as being too big and too costly and that one was priced at \$16 billion. We are looking at \$900 billion. That was \$16 billion. It was too much and too expensive. It added to the debt too much at a time that we had a difficult economy as well.

Here, it appears, billions of dollars are being spent on all kinds of programs that should be addressed in the normal appropriations process. We have a process, and we can use that, but now we are putting in money, and people have heard this litany: \$400 million for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, \$6 billion for clean water revolving funds, \$6 billion to convert Federal buildings to "green

buildings," \$1 billion for the 2010 census, \$400 million to replace the Social Security Administration's National Computer Center. Now, all this may be fine—\$600 million for new vehicles for the Government, \$50 million for the National Endowment for the Arts—all of it may be fine, but that is not a stimulus package. That is a spending package. That is an appropriations bill that should go through in the normal process.

Economists and members of the President's economic team have stressed the need for funds to be targeted, timely, and temporary. However, over \$250 billion of the spending in this bill is for income-transfer payments that will put the Federal Government on the hook for long-term spending as far as the eye can see—and just when the baby boomers start to retire in 2012 in large numbers. That is not wise.

We will also hear some rhetoric about how spending is a more effective means of stimulating the economy than tax reductions. I do not agree with that. I do not believe that. I do not think economic theory nor the practice of what we have seen in the past supports it.

Research by the President's own Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors suggests \$3 of economic activity per \$1 reduction in taxes. The economy needs some gas in the tank, not sugar. We should focus on creating an environment and incentives for businesses and individuals to invest and create real jobs, not illusory jobs created by a big Government handout that will not be permanent in a competitive global economy and will load too much burden on future generations by debt and taxes. We should provide real and permanent tax reduction accompanied by truly timely, targeted, and temporary spending. I could support an expansion for roads and bridges because we need the roads and bridges. That is not what is in this grab bag.

I would like to list another example of a tax cut that we could do that could put as much and would probably put as much as \$545 billion into the U.S. economy—\$545 billion. This is from an article written by Alan Sinai last week. It is something we have done in the past, where we have lowered the taxes on repatriation of foreign-earned dollars. The last time we did that, we reduced the corporate tax rate of 5.25 percent for 1 year. We brought back into the United States nearly \$360 billion of money.

That is money that is earned by companies such as Hill's pet food in Topeka, KS, which has pet food plants in Europe and Asia. They make money there, but they cannot bring it home because they are subject to this 5.25 corporate tax rate. So they leave it there. But for a 1-year time period, you could take that down to 1 percent, or a low number, and they will say: I am going to bring it home. Then it puts gas in the tank and not sugar in the

tank. That is a tax cut that will help us. This is capital our economy needs and needs badly. I cannot see a single rational reason why we would not take action to encourage American companies to bring capital home.

Let me close by saying there are a number of worthwhile spending programs that need to be addressed but not under the guise of fiscal stimulus. We do need to address infrastructure issues, and I could support a substantial amount of infrastructure spending, but the lag time on these is difficult and it is long. On the other hand, there is defense spending that could take place even now and the pipeline is not as long and, importantly, that is money we are already scheduled to spend. It simply would be advancing the timetable, not expanding the amount.

My point is, as I started off, if we would spend a little more time here and in committee and work together, we could get 80 votes for this bill. If this bill is forced through this week and we end up with the size of Government of 30 percent of GDP, then this will be mostly on a partisan-line vote. That is not the way we should start. It is not the way we should go.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized for 15 minutes.

Mr. CASEY. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I rise tonight to speak as well on the challenge we have ahead of us with regard to the legislation we are debating this week. We will be considering a lot of amendments to that legislation; that is, the Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

I want to speak, first of all, in a broad way about the challenge ahead of us. I sent a letter toward the end of last year to both our majority leader Senator REID, as well as to Senator MCCONNELL, outlining priorities, as I saw them, from the vantage point of Pennsylvania's challenges as well as the country's.

I used a phrase that we have heard often, the last word of which might be a little different than we have heard. We have heard summaries of this strategy where the priorities of any kind of recovery bill should be focused on being timely, targeted, and transformative. I believe all three are essential: Timely, meaning we cannot sit on this for too long; we have to act. I think that is essential; targeted, in the sense we cannot have broad spending. We have to make sure we target the dollars to strategies that work; transformative, in the sense that as we are making investments in infrastructure or in people to get them through the recession, and also to generate spending, we also have a chance to be transformative, to change our economy for the better and to transform people's lives.

In Pennsylvania—and it is true of virtually any State in the country; we

just saw the data that unemployment went up in every single State in the month of December, and I know the Presiding Officer understands this from his work as a Governor and now as a Senator—in a State like ours in Pennsylvania—whether it is the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or the Commonwealth of Virginia—we are seeing challenges all around. We have had record job loss. Even foreclosure rates, which have been a lot lower than the rest of the country, are now spiking up. Families have been hit with a kind of economic trauma we have not seen in more than a generation. The same is true of businesses. Their bottom lines have been decimated by the downturn in this economy, principally because businesses and families have not had access to credit to borrow money for a small business or to borrow money for student loans or for the purchase of an automobile or something that a family wants to spend money on but cannot do it without credit.

So we know the trauma that has been visited upon the American people. We also know that just as that has been happening, there has also been a real crisis of confidence, some of this emanating from the way the Troubled Asset Relief Program, the so-called TARP, was implemented by the Treasury Department in the prior administration.

One of the obligations we have in the Senate in this debate, but even beyond this debate, is to do everything we can to restore that confidence. You could express it as confidence, you could express it as trust. However you describe it, a good bit of that—too much of that—was lost in the last couple months. As people were feeling the trauma of this economy on their own lives or on their own families or on their own communities, there was also a loss of trust and confidence in what the Federal Government did or did not do and what the Federal Government can do going forward. So as we consider this legislation, this is not just about a program and dollars and whether the strategy will work. This will be a test of the Senate, a test of the Congress and the administration, in terms of our ability to restore some of that confidence and literally to restore trust in our Government.

One of the ways we can begin to repair that relationship between the American people and the Congress, between the people who pay the taxes and the Government that spends those dollars, is to work on a couple of areas of oversight. It is not the whole answer, but it goes a long way to helping. So I have two amendments I will be offering this week on oversight.

The first amendment will allow for a comprehensive assessment through the creation of a joint select committee on economic recovery oversight. This oversight committee will be made up of Members of the House and the Senate and will be required to submit reports to every Member of the House and the

Senate but, more importantly, to the American people every 3 months. The reports will focus on, first, the success of this act in creating jobs and the details behind that; and, no. 2, any instances of waste, fraud, and abuse in programs funded by this act.

Membership on the panel will break down as follows: 10 Members of the Senate, including the chairmen and ranking members of the Committees on Finance and Appropriations, 4 Members appointed from the majority party by the majority leader of the Senate, and 2 Members from the minority party appointed by the minority party itself; secondly, 10 Members of the House, including the chairmen and ranking members of the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Appropriations; and it goes on from there in the same way as the Senate.

While I recognize the administration has pushed for and the bill before us includes a new Recovery Act Accountability and Transparency Board, I want to make sure the legislative branch is in a position to carry out our oversight responsibilities. Congress has not always done a good job on that, and we have to ensure that a good job is done in this instance for this kind of oversight.

The second amendment I have would direct the Government Accountability Office, known by the acronym GAO, to compile reports of the Offices of the Inspectors General in each of the Federal Departments or agencies that expend or obligate funds under the Recovery Act. The GAO would in turn submit reports to Congress that would contain the following: No. 1, a summary of oversight activities of the Offices of Inspectors General relating to expenditure of recovery funds; and, No. 2, an evaluation of the effectiveness of this act. So you have the GAO, an independent entity, reviewing what has been happening under this legislation.

The aim of these GAO reports would be to assess which provisions of the act have been effective at creating jobs. The whole intent of this legislation is to create jobs. We better make sure that happens. The reports would be submitted no later than 120 days from enactment of the act, with followup reports submitted at 180 days after enactment as well as 240 days, again, after enactment.

Both of these amendments are focused on oversight. That is the language we use to make sure the bill and to make sure the Government is doing its job to carry out the purposes of this recovery and reinvestment act.

But we have to do more than that. This effort with the two amendments is a way to very specifically begin to rebuild the confidence the American people must have in what the Congress does and to recover and reinvigorate some of that trust we should have in our Government, especially at this time. No piece of legislation can do that on its own. No Senator or Member of the House can do that on his or her

own. But we have to try collectively to do all we can to rebuild confidence because if we do not have that kind of confidence going forward for the effectiveness of this legislation, then we cannot expect the American people to support this legislation and the programs infused with capital by this legislation over a long period of time. So we have much work to do to strengthen oversight, and by doing that to begin to increase the confidence the American people have in our Government and in this legislation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Under the previous order, the Senator from Maine is recognized for 20 minutes.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today, at this most consequential of times, and as a member of the Senate Committee on Finance, to speak to the issue of the economic stimulus we have begun to consider here in the U.S. Senate.

We are deliberating on this legislation because the gravity of our economic circumstances is the most dire we have witnessed since the Great Depression, and in just three months, this recession will officially become the longest and quite possibly the deepest since the 1930s. We lost 2.6 million jobs last year, the most since 1945. The U.S. Department of Labor has reported the number of Americans receiving unemployment benefits has reached 4.8 million, an all-time high since record-keeping began in 1967—and that doesn't include the nearly 1.7 million getting benefits through an extension last summer.

Mark Zandi—chief economist for Moody's Economy.com, who has advised both Senator McCain and President Obama—has stated, “without stimulus, unemployment will rise well into the double digits by this time next year.” And then we learned last Friday that the economy shrank at its fastest pace in nearly 27 years in the fourth quarter of 2008. Our gross national product dropped at a 3.8-percent annual rate, worst since 1982.

So, indisputably, the grave nature of the current landscape dictates the urgency of passing a substantial and comprehensive economic stimulus package. I want to support a stimulus package. But I cannot support just any package. This Chamber cannot support just any package.

We have a responsibility—an obligation—to apply a rigorous standard to determine whether this approach will help extricate our Nation from this crisis.

And yet, even the best economic minds are not in agreement or accord

on what is the optimal stimulus to pursue—and what it would achieve. Business Week, in its January 28 issue, asks “how much does boosting government spending or cutting taxes help the private sector? Can massive fiscal stimulus . . . create jobs and increase economic output?”

David Leonhardt, economics columnist for The New York Times, stipulated in an article on January 29, 2009, that such a “bill should help the economy in both the near term and the long term. But the government doesn't go out and spend about \$800 billion every day. The details matter.” He is absolutely right—the details do matter—and that is why this amendment process is so fundamental. Current CBO Director Douglas Elmendorf testified before the House Budget Committee on January 27, 2009, and said, “stimulative policies, if well designed, could hasten the economy's recovery and reduce the overall loss of output during the recession.” That is precisely the test of how effective a fiscal stimulus is—does it help bring us out of recession?

In that light, we must not confuse stimulus with omnibus. For those who say we cannot burden this bill with provisions that are not within the strictures of economic stimulus, I couldn't agree more. And to do otherwise would only compromise the credibility of any package that may ultimately be enacted.

This is a multidimensional crisis that requires a multidimensional approach, and it is critical we get this right. Already Congress passed the Troubled Asset Relief Program, which as we all know has had its own significant problems. Already the Federal Reserve has essentially exhausted its options to improve the economy through monetary policy, having reduced interest rates to zero—something else that hasn't happened since the 1930s—and lent more than \$1 trillion to stabilize the financial and credit markets. So as I said during the mark-up of the Senate Finance Committee's portion of this package, we ought to remember that for us, in crafting fiscal policy to meet this historic challenge, there are no “do-overs.” We only have so many arrows in our fiscal quiver.

And so this debate shouldn't be about how much we label as “tax relief” and how much we label as “spending.” We must not retreat into our ideological corners or comfort zones. Rather, it should be about the merits of the individual measures in this legislation and whether the totality of the package can—in the timely, temporary, and targeted fashion we have employed on stimulus measures in the past—deliver job creation and assistance to people in need—who also will spend funds quickly, further bolstering economic recovery. We must ask, does this package fit the times—because in the words of an editorial in the Lewiston Sun-Journal in my home State of Maine: “right now, there's a country, an economy and a basic way of life that needs res-

cuing. Most of all, though, the country needs a program that works . . .”

I ask unanimous consent the entire editorial be printed in the RECORD.

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

#### SENATORS, BRING SENSE TO STIMULUS

In economic stimulus, numbers have ceased to matter. The current package before Congress is \$819 billion, but it could be a quadrillion, for all it matters. What's been proposed is stimulus at any cost, because continued lagging of American economic output is a failure beyond comfortable calculation.

Sens. OLYMPIA SNOWE and SUSAN COLLINS are center stage this debate, by virtue of their center-right leanings. Their lobbies are filled with lobbyists and their ears are filled with pleas, suggestions and threats, perhaps, of what their vote on the stimulus means, either way.

Stakes are high. So are the costs. But Maine's senators must ignore both of those, we think, in favor of the simplest approach, to evaluating the merits of the stimulus: Prove to us it is going to work, they should say, and soon. Shortcomings or delays need not apply.

Praise and damnation for the stimulus from the right and left are both steeped in truth. The country does need targeted programs to strengthen safety nets, help states stem red ink and put people to work through infrastructure and other investments.

But it doesn't need a wish list, the rush to fulfill an ideological agenda that's been stewing for eight years under the former administration. There's time for that later. Right now, there's a country, an economy and a basic way of life that needs rescuing.

Most of all, though, the country needs a program that works. Fast. This is where SNOWE and COLLINS can hold sway, by bringing common sense to the stimulus legislation through the application of basic, pragmatic principles.

The country has already spent in haste. The 2007 stimulus cut checks to every American, which felt great, but flopped. The 2008 rescue for banks on their eves of destruction is looking like the money was thrown into a gaping maw, never to be seen again.

That Congress is now pressuring banks to lend their bailout funds, instead of hoarding them, is testimony to the contradictory nature of that bailout/rescue/stimulus. The \$700 billion was meant to stabilize the economy, not those institutions that acted so recklessly to destroy it.

So here we are, as Americans, burned twice by major spending packages that haven't spurred the desired effect—staunching our economic bleeding and injecting fiscal penicillin to kill the diseases spreading through our markets. Two strikes. We can't afford a third.

President Barack Obama has presented the most thoughtful package to date. There's little question that expertise and intellect replaced emotion and paranoia as the sentiments driving its creation. The questions that remain are basic: Does it work, and how soon?

These are what Senators COLLINS and SNOWE should have answered to their satisfaction before deciding which way to vote. The numbers and stakes are high, obviously.

What matters is that this stimulus package makes sense, and that it works. Quickly.

Ms. SNOWE. Moreover, we must calibrate even more carefully the imperative for speed against the ironclad necessity of getting this legislation right—given this bill in its current

form would add nearly \$900 billion to our national debt—and that is before any interest payments—on top of the \$10.6 trillion debt that exists. And that means, we cannot open the door to permanent spending that exceeds the life and purpose of what is before us today.

In fact, Alice Rivlin, former Director of the Office of Management and Budget in the Clinton administration, offered the following fiscal reality-check in her testimony before the House Budget Committee last week, “because we’re doing this outside the budget process, it means no one has to talk about what the long-term effects of any of this might be.” Well, let us talk about the long term effects here and now.

As my colleagues are well aware, CBO has projected a staggering \$3.1 trillion budget deficit over the next 10 years, and that’s before we pass this bill that will add \$900 billion to that total. And as we all know, CBO assumes that any additional funding levels added for Federal spending will be added to the budget baseline and extended in perpetuity with an inflation adjustment. In other words, this bill may exist entirely outside the normal budget process, but it will now be in CBO’s baseline—meaning any future reductions will be considered by some to be “cuts.”

Therefore, we must ensure that programs that may well be great policy but not economic stimulus are not considered in this package and instead are vetted through the regular budget and legislative process. And that spending authorized in this bill ends when its emergency, stimulative function ends—with any continuation again only considered in the future through the normal process. As the Concord Coalition among others has called for, we must have an exit strategy to ensure that we don’t create unintended consequences down the road that will cause additional economic hardship and harm.

On that note, I believe that we deserve from the proponents of this bill a breakdown in each of the different titles of this legislation such as what are the job-creation expectations for each, or how precisely will they assist those displaced by the current recession and will that assistance itself also bolster our economy in the near term? Further, I am working on an amendment that will require the new Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board created in this legislation to include, in its quarterly reports, a specific listing of the numbers of jobs being created by each title in this act. But most critically, the amendment will direct the Board to recommend for rescission the unobligated balances of any program in the Act that are not currently creating—or cannot be reasonably expected to create—jobs or help those displaced by the current recession. These provisions will hopefully shine a spotlight on the efficacy of the new law in creating badly needed jobs.

Again, the bottom line question for us must not be exclusively whether a particular proposal in this package is a good idea. The bottom line question is, as I conveyed to Vice President Biden in a conversation between us recently, will this package work in terms of jump-starting the economy?

Columnist Robert Samuelson spoke directly to that challenge when he wrote in *The Washington Post* today, “...the immediate need is for the stimulus package to stimulate—now. It needs to be frontloaded.” I do think it is positive that the legislation contains some measures to move money out quickly and effectively, such as shortening the normal deadline for Federal agencies to commit funds, and setting deadlines on Federal awarding of formula grants, among others, so States, communities, or agencies are not sitting on the money. They will be required to expend it within a given period of time in order to impact the economy.

In addition, as we heard last year from CBO, extending unemployment benefits is a preeminent stimulus tool, as it concluded its cost-effectiveness is “large” . . . the length of time for impact is “short” . . . and the uncertainty about the policy’s effects is “small.” Now we have Moody’s Economy.com estimating that every dollar spent on unemployment benefits generates \$1.63 in near term GDP. So I am pleased the finance package I supported in committee included about \$39 billion to extend unemployment insurance. And I thank the Finance Committee Chair BAUCUS for including my measure to exclude the first \$2,400 of unemployment benefits from taxation, to further maximize the provision’s stimulative effect.

On the tax side, the Finance package also includes a payroll tax credit, known as the making work pay tax credit for more than 95 percent of working families in the United States—which Mark Zandi has said will be “particularly effective, as the benefit will go to lower income households...that are much more likely to spend any tax benefit they receive.”

I am also pleased that Senator GRASSLEY was able to insert an absolutely vital provision to middle-income taxpayers in America that addresses the alternative minimum tax, which is an egregious and onerous tax on so many millions of taxpayers across this country, and, if left applied, would make the tax credit of \$500 and \$1,000 less effective. I am very pleased that was included to add another \$70 billion worth of tax relief to middle-income America.

The finance portion also includes increasing eligibility for the refundable portion of the child tax credit that Senator LINCOLN and I have advocated and championed over the years. We have included this child tax credit going back to 2001 in the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act. This incentive would reach low-in-

come families earning between \$6,000 and \$12,667 a year.

I have heard arguments before about refundability, and people will say we should not provide funding to those families who don’t have a Federal income tax liability. I would point out that although these people may not earn enough to have a Federal income tax liability, they do work and contribute to local taxes and payroll taxes and, the refundable child credit will get additional money into the pockets of those most likely to spend it.

After all, I don’t think that anybody would deny that low-income families earning between \$6,000 and \$12,667 on an annual basis should have some benefits under this legislation. I don’t think anybody can deny that they will not be spending that money and that it will not be stimulative in the final analysis. I do believe they deserve to be part of this stimulus plan.

I also believe that preserving and creating jobs over the short term that will also endure for the long term are not mutually exclusive goals. To the contrary. As ranking member of the Small Business Committee, I am very pleased the Finance Committee package included tax provisions to assist small businesses to sustain operations and employees. In particular, we extend small business expensing to \$250,000 to promote investment. After all, small businesses are going to be the lifeline to job creation, as they have been in the past. In fact, small businesses create two-thirds of all net new jobs in America. They will be the lifeblood of this economic recovery. It is important to extend the expensing provision of \$250,000, as well as provide a 5-year net operating loss carryback to firms, giving them an immediate tax refund they can use to sustain operations and hire new employees, among other priorities.

But above all—and I underscore this point—those receiving Federal money under the rescue plan under TARP will not have access or be allowed to take advantage of these additional taxpayer resources.

In addition, we must neither neglect nor forget our Nation’s distressed and rural communities. Our bill recognizes that imperative by including an additional \$1.5 billion in 2008 and 2009 allocation authority for the New Markets Tax Credit. I am told that the community development financial institutions fund, which administers the incentive, can allocate this 2008 credit authority within 60 days, which will create 11,000 permanent jobs and 35,000 construction jobs.

Since the only thing we don’t want to be temporary in this package is the jobs it creates, this legislation will place Americans on the vanguard of the jobs of the future with the extension of the renewable energy tax credit to promote green technology, which will be absolutely crucial as nations compete to emerge from this global economic downturn. In fact, if we had not dithered last year and opted to

pass the extension of the renewable tax credits at the beginning of 2008, we would have already been on the road to creating 100,000 new jobs.

I have heard a lot of arguments against renewable energy tax credits, saying they are not stimulative. We are in the midst of a global downturn, and every country on Earth is going to be competing for jobs in the 21st century. Determining what is the best path to creating those jobs and investments in green technology is on the forefront of job creation. I want to be sure this country is in the vanguard when it comes to creating jobs of the future.

Certainly making investments in renewable energy sources is going to be so critical and so essential to job creation and to competing with other nations as they attempt to emerge as well from this global downturn.

In fact, these renewable tax credits will create more than 89,000 more jobs by giving certainty to companies that can start now on projects and count on these important incentives to take risks and grow. In fact, there are a number of projects in my own State of Maine that have been postponed and placed on hold because they cannot receive the benefits from the tax credits or financial institutions have suspended their loans and their lending opportunities. That has prevented these companies from moving forward on projects that they have wanted to pursue over the last few months. These are major projects that will create thousands of jobs in my State, and the same is true in so many States across the country. That is why this investment in renewables is going to be essential to job creation.

Considering the entirety of the stimulus package, both tax and spending, and its ability to have an immediate impact, CBO has now reported that of the current \$884 billion size of the bill, \$694 billion, or 78 percent, spends out in 2009 and 2010. That is a significant portion of this stimulus plan. Yet on the purely appropriations side, the spendout over the next 2 years is only 49 percent, and I believe we can and must do better.

Furthermore, I must say that there are allocations that simply do not belong in the stimulus package. Do we need to include \$575 million for renovation and research at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in this legislation? Or \$2 billion for advanced battery manufacturing? Or \$135 million for the management of lands and resources?

Again, there are many more examples in this legislation that certainly should be identified as ones that should go through the normal budgetary process.

There are other provisions that are unequivocally worthy of strong support. But again, we have to identify them as to whether this is the appropriate vehicle for their consideration, and I would say not.

I am hopeful in the final analysis that we can further address this pivotal matter of nonstimulative provisions through the amendment process over the coming days. As the New York Times columnist David Brooks recently wrote, the package, as currently constituted, "is part temporary and part permanent, part timely and part untimely, part targeted and part untargeted." And he also deftly pointed out, "leadership involves prioritizing." I think we will have to work in the days ahead on both sides of the political aisle to offer amendments to bring accountability to this process, to bring both sides together, and to develop the kind of consensus that is going to restore the integrity and confidence in the package we ultimately pass.

Mr. President, finally, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business, I am pleased that the Senate Appropriations Committee also included multiple small business lending provisions that I think are critical to the overall objective of this legislation which, of course, is to create jobs.

Let me also address one provision that I think is critical and that has been part of the finance package—and that is expanding the Medicaid Program to assist States all across this country. I have heard that many have suggested that somehow this is not stimulative, and that it is not appropriate to include additional funding for Medicaid assistance to the States.

There are 45 States that are facing significant budget shortfalls with a combined budgetary gap of \$350 billion. Are we suggesting it would not have a profound impact on our national economy if all 45 States, which are going to have to make some drastic decisions under any circumstances, had to make even more difficult choices if we did not provide the \$87 billion that is included in the Finance Committee package to assist them?

In fact, I think it is going to be critically important that we do so because otherwise they will have to raise taxes and cut spending dramatically, which obviously will have a tremendous and consequential impact on the state of the economy, leading to more job losses and a more severe downturn.

As we know, States are required by their constitutions to balance their budgets. So, obviously, they will have to resort to raising taxes or reducing spending. I think we have an obligation to be a strong Federal partner and provide assistance when it comes to Medicaid because, after all, not only are States having difficulty with their existing caseloads and increases in cost, but they are also facing a burgeoning caseload due to job losses. In fact, for every 1 percent increase in unemployment, an additional 1 million Americans will qualify for Medicaid or the children's health insurance program under the current enrollment criteria.

All that said, I also think we should impose some conditions on the States.

First, they should not be able to expand their current benefits. They should maintain their existing benefits coverage. Second, we should require prompt payment, so that states cannot sit on payments, but rather within a timely fashion of 30 days have to reimburse providers for care because delays in payments to providers ultimately threaten their operations, limit their ability to make investments to take care of their patients, or put them at risk of ultimately having to cut back substantially, which will have a tremendous impact on the overall economy.

Time is of the essence and so is the obligation to get this right to the best of our ability. Hopefully, we can achieve a bipartisan bill, one that is going to achieve the legitimate objectives of job creation, of stimulus and assisting those who have been displaced as a result of the downturn in this economy. These goals are not mutually exclusive. In fact, I think they are ones that could easily be accomplished as we go through this process, if we all agree in the final analysis that we need to move forward with a package that will meet the times and to accommodate the enormity of the challenge we are facing in this country today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, I am fortunate to have heard the remarks of the Senator from Maine. They are excellent, and I find so much of it I agree with.

I am a brandnew Senator, but I have been around the Senate for 36 years. I think in those 36 years, this is truly one of the historic moments in all the years I have been following the Senate. We are about to embark on a task that will test this institution, as we begin the debate on the response to the profound economic crisis we face.

Last Monday, as my first full week as a U.S. Senator began, thousands of American workers lost their jobs. In a single day, tens of thousands of families lost their breadwinners, men and women lost the dignity that comes with work, and States and cities across the country lost the productive labor and the tax revenues those workers have provided.

This was just a single bad day. But over the last couple years, the news from our economy has been increasingly disturbing. American payrolls shrank by over 2.5 million jobs last year, including 524,000 in December alone, touching every corner of this country. The accelerating pace of unemployment tells us there is more bad news to come. Along with laid-off workers, we have unused productivity capacity. Thirty percent of our manufacturing strength is idle.

It is no wonder that Americans are cautious about spending. But their caution, as we know, is reinforcing the slowdown.

With that decline in consumer spending, our retailers are shutting their doors, laying off sales staff and management. With declining sales, manufacturers are laying off workers and shutting down assembly lines. Responses that are perfectly rational for individuals making their own decisions only add to our problems, making us all worse off.

Our jobs, our savings, our homes, our credit—all are under siege. Left alone, we know things will only get worse. We have to break that vicious cycle.

I remind my colleagues of these troubling trends because as bad as things are, they can get worse. Because we have failed to revive employment, consumer spending—the key to today's economy—and consumer confidence—the key to tomorrow's economy—remain in a slump. Because we failed to restore stability in home prices, foreclosures continue to spread. Because we have failed so far to clean up our banking system, lending and borrowing are drying up.

That is the real urgency behind the task of building an effective economic recovery plan because if we fail to act, we can be sure that we will lose more jobs, lose more homes, and reduce the value of our economy.

Because so much has gone wrong, our recovery plan must tackle many different problems at the same time. Because so much of our economic value has been lost, the scale of our response must be equal to that challenge. Because of the risk of further decline, our response must be rapid.

That is why the Senate is beginning debate today on a historic economic recovery investment program for America. We must do something dramatic to turn our economy around. At the same time, the American people will rightly judge whether we have used this moment wisely, whether we have invested these hundreds of billions of dollars of their hard-earned dollars in ways that will improve their lives.

Job creation and job preservation must be our goal. Jobs, jobs, jobs. Every job lost is another blow to our economy, losing productive work, spending power, and the revenue that supports the education, health care, roads, water, police, and fire protection provided by our State and local governments. Every job lost is truly a human tragedy, for the man and woman who loses the dignity of work, and the families thrown into turmoil.

One important way to create jobs is make more investments that will make our economy more productive—clearly, roads, bridges, clean water. A smart power grid, as we discussed with former Vice President Al Gore last week in the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, could become to our economy what the railroads were in the 19th century, what the highways were to postwar America, and what the Internet has meant to our digital age. And as we discussed last week in the Judiciary Committee, we can revolutionize

health care records and at the same time save billions of dollars while digitizing paper records, making sure we have appropriate privacy safeguards. We can improve health care, save money, help protect our patients, and create jobs. We will need to install new computers, routers, and software and educate and train the people with the skills to make the system work.

Listen, as jobs are created, consumers will be able to spend, homeowners will be able to keep up with their mortgages, families will be able to keep their kids in college. That is what economic recovery means, and that is what we have to do.

Finally, just as important as the jobs we create will be jobs preserved by keeping State and local governments able to provide the schools, the health care, the police and fire protection that we cannot do without. They will need teachers, nurses, firemen, policemen, and health inspectors on the job. Just today our congressional delegation from Delaware met with the Governor of Delaware. This crisis, just in Delaware alone, has slashed our revenue projections by \$5 billion in just 6 months. We face a \$600 million deficit, which will require shutting down services and laying off workers. This will add to the economic slowdown and reduce the services on which our citizens depend.

Support directly to State and local governments will get out to where it is needed. We know that because we know those governments are now forced to cut back in the face of declining economic activity and revenues. They need the money and they will use it. We have to get it to them.

This crisis has knocked a big hole in our economy, and it is essential we fill it quickly. Because of the size and speed of this task, we must also have extraordinary oversight and transparency to assure Americans that we are doing this right and that we are doing it openly. We must have additional resources and people dedicated to the sole purpose of auditing and investigating economic recovery spending. We must have transparency. We must make public all of the grants, contracts, and the oversight activities themselves. This is a historic undertaking, and we must have a historic level of transparency and oversight.

During my years of experience with the Senate, I have developed a deep respect for this very unique institution. I have seen it tested in war and peace, in good times and bad. The debate on our economic recovery plan this week is precisely the task for which this body, the Senate, was created. This is a moment that will test this institution. We must deliberate, we must debate, we must decide. There are no easy choices this week. There will be no easy votes. But I am convinced the Senate will meet this test, just as I am convinced our country will meet the test of these extraordinary times.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

## MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

### TRIBUTE TO GRAYSON COUNTY DECA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the accomplishments of the Grayson County DECA from my home State of Kentucky and their efforts of promoting entrepreneurship through education and community awareness.

DECA is a high school association of marketing students which promotes the development of professionalism especially with regards to entrepreneurship and is the high school equivalent to the college association of Delta Epsilon Chi.

The Grayson County chapter works under the advisement of Cynthia Smith and Diane Horne, and comprised of dedicated young men and women, including two juniors from Grayson County High School, Tyler Lewis and Alex Henderson, who recently participated in the Entrepreneurship Promotion Project for organization.

The project has integrated its ideals into the local Grayson County schools with ventures such as developing different business ideas and creating sales presentations. They have reached out to the community with public service announcements on the radio and editorials in the local newspaper.

The Entrepreneurship Promotion Project earned the group a sixth place honors in their category at the spring 2008 International DECA competition.

In addition to the promotion of entrepreneurship, DECA requires that its members participate in many hours of community service.

Recently, DECA has organized a job shadowing program for the senior advanced marketing class at Grayson County High School. The program allows students to explore a career of their choice and gain professional experience by pairing them with local businesspeople.

The students explored careers at the Grayson County News Gazette, the Grayson County Sheriff's Department, the Leitchfield Police Department, the County Courthouse, CPA firms, law offices and the Chamber of Commerce.

The members of DECA have worked to raise awareness and have successfully obtained a proclamation from Grayson County Judge Executive Gary Logsdon and Governor Steve Beshear designating the last week in February as Entrepreneurship Week in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and in Grayson County. The group was also honored with a citation from the Kentucky House of Representatives.

DECA is a wonderful example of students striving for excellence both in