

have a chance to do that in April, within 30 days.

So what you see is, in effect, all of the various ideas with respect to extending unemployment so that folks who are hurting so badly do not go without for a short period of time—a week, 2 weeks, 30 days—a variety of different approaches. All of those time periods are shorter than the time period for when we will have an opportunity to make tough decisions for the long term that we have heard Democrats and Republicans talking about this morning.

So I hope that we can get back to working in a bipartisan way around those two areas of agreement that will help folks who are hurting now, help them quickly, not have them suffer any more, even for a few additional days, and that we recognize that in April, on the Budget Committee on which I serve, we will have the opportunity to tackle the larger budget issues. We have very strong bipartisan leadership between Senator CONRAD and Senator GREGG. A lot of us thought they were right on their debt commission. I supported that, supported it for a long time. So we have an opportunity to make those long-term budget decisions Democrats and Republicans rightly have said are so important, beginning next month. So let's do both. Let's help people who are hurting now and recognize how serious the challenge is with respect to the long term as well.

The only other point I would make with respect to the unemployment extension is a point made by a number of our country's leading economists who are advising both Republicans and Democrats, again, in a bipartisan fashion. Mark Zandi, for example, one of our leading economists who is relied on by individuals of both political parties, has pointed out that for every dollar of unemployment, our country gets \$1.64 in return. The folks who are unemployed spend their benefits as quickly as they can get them. They spend them only on essentials. They spend them on the essentials of life.

It is pretty obvious that consumer spending is a very significant part of economic recovery. The economic recovery is obviously fragile. We have so many folks out of work, and those folks and the folks who are worried about losing their jobs put off spending on anything but the most basic needs. So obviously that slowdown in consumer spending also takes a toll on our economy. If we are going to make up for the decline in consumer spending, one obvious way, it seems to me, is to get this extra help to folks who are hurting so badly today in our country.

So it strikes me that the decision to not get help to people immediately is simply illogical. It is bad from the standpoint of economic recovery. It is obviously going to compound the hurt Americans who are out of work are experiencing now, and colleagues on both sides of the aisle have said they don't want that to happen.

So I am very hopeful that even before the end of the day, for the folks who are out of work, who are exhausting their unemployment and COBRA benefits—that there will be discussions here in the Senate to try to make sure folks are not denied the bare minimums that are needed to just get by and not denied even for just a few days. The fact is, these are folks who are making \$250, \$300 a week. None of them are living a life of leisure. No one can say these folks are somehow, as a result of their benefits, disinclined to find work. They are not part of "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous." They are the millions who today walk that economic tight-rope, always feeling that another big bill is going to push them into the abyss where they cannot afford to pay the rent, cannot afford to pay the utility bill, cannot afford food. It is not right to let these folks suffer.

I would submit that on a matter such as this, which is, in my view, a question of right and wrong, that is what extending unemployment benefits for a short period of time to prevent human suffering is all about, that we stay at this effort so folks who are hurting so badly in our country do not lose out, if even for only a few days. I will be at my post to continue to work and talk with colleagues of both political parties toward that end. We have to stay at it to ensure there is no break in the essential benefits the most vulnerable of our country so desperately needs.

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2010

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 4957, which was received from the House and is at the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Reserving the right to object, let me say that the Senator from Oregon has made some very good points, and he is exactly right. They are points we agree with on this side of the aisle.

I do not object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4957) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. WYDEN. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read three times and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 4957) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of Colorado). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONTINUING EXTENSION ACT, 2010

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I have listened to the debate in the last few hours, yesterday, and today. I have heard these debates for years about unemployment compensation, unemployment insurance. In the end, some of my colleagues vote for extension of unemployment benefits for hard-working Americans, Americans who have had jobs and are trying to find jobs but have lost their jobs.

When I saw what happened a month ago when Senator BUNNING, time and time again, single-handedly for a period of time—because of the peculiar rules of this institution, one Senator representing a State that has less than 1 percent of the population, one Senator representing a State which makes up less than 1 percent of the country—granted the minority leader is in that State too—one Senator can block the extension of unemployment compensation to millions of Americans, to people in Youngstown, Lima, Mansfield, or Chillicothe and Toledo. Now we have a handful of his colleagues doing the same thing.

Sometimes I think they don't understand unemployment compensation. They believe unemployment is welfare. It is called unemployment insurance. That doesn't mean people are looking for a handout. It means workers, as virtually everyone does who is working, pay into an insurance fund when they are working. The whole point is, if they lose their job they collect unemployment insurance.

It is like you buy car insurance, hoping you don't have to use it. But if you get in a car accident, you use the insurance to pay for it. Many people don't ever have to collect unemployment insurance. They are the lucky ones. It is the same with health insurance. You buy health insurance and you hope to not use it, but if you get sick, then you use your health insurance. Whether you are a worker in Boulder or Pueblo or Trinidad or Columbus or Dayton, you need that unemployment insurance as a backup.

So many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, so many conservatives think it is a welfare program: I got laid off. I can draw unemployment and stay on it, and I don't have to work. I can enjoy my time off.

It is not vacation. The New York Times had some articles the other day

about the number of people who can't find jobs and how it affects their health. It affects their mental health, their relationships with their children and spouses. It affects their views of themselves and their self-worth. It is not a welfare program. It is not enough money to get by comfortably. It is enough to keep them going with the hopes that they will find a job pretty soon.

There are, of course, requirements too. They don't just sit home and draw unemployment. They are required to actively seek work in most States. I know of people in my State, as does the Presiding Officer, in Colorado, who have sent out 20, 30, 50 résumés a week. Most of them are not even answered or the answers are curt and negative over and over.

My colleagues, all of whom dress up, men and women both, wear decent clothes, are paid \$170,000 a year. Many more come from great wealth. They probably don't experience what unemployment compensation is like. I will not be personal, and I will not mention any names, but for them to stand on the Senate floor—I know what they really think sometimes—for them to come up with all kinds of reasons to block the extension of unemployment benefits—not to mention COBRA, the program, the government helps people continue to get health insurance after they have lost their job, when they have almost no money to spend on it—don't know how important that is to people's lives. I hear some of my colleagues say: I am voting against an unemployment extension because we are not paying for it.

First, unemployment insurance is considered emergency spending. This is a little bit too much beltway talk, but it has always been considered emergency spending. We don't have to find a way to compensate for it, to pay for it, any more than when there is a flood in North Dakota or there is a hurricane in Louisiana or, unfortunately, there is a war in Iraq which had always historically been paid for. Senator Simpson, a former Republican Senator from Wyoming, said the Iraq war is the first time he ever knew about in American history when we didn't pay for a war. I hear these lectures—and that is what they are—from our conservative colleagues, preaching to us, talking to us like we are children because we are not paying for an unemployment extension.

In the last 10 years, they voted for a war that they refused to pay for. Only \$1 trillion it has cost. They voted for the giveaway for drug companies and insurance companies, all in the name of Medicare privatization. That was \$100 billion or more. They didn't pay for it. Then they voted for tax cuts that went to the richest Americans. They just forgot to pay for that too.

We do tax cuts for the rich; we do giveaways to the drug companies and insurance companies. Tax cuts for the rich, not paid for; giveaway to the in-

surance companies and the drug companies, not paid for; a war in Iraq, not paid for. Yet they are all of a sudden shrinking it down to: We are not going to let workers in this country who are laid off get their sustenance—just a few dollars for rent, for food, kids' school supplies—we are going to block that. That is, frankly, why people around the country are angry at Congress.

They say: Why can't you just do the right thing here instead of making it political? They have made it political by saying: This is where we are drawing the line. We are not paying for unemployment insurance extension. If you are not going to pay for it, we are not going to do it.

It is the same over and over. Offer another drug company giveaway or tax cuts for the rich, they will say: Where do I sign up? That will help the country. Their way of thinking is a bit peculiar.

Senator KAUFMAN, who has such insight on preventing another disaster on Wall Street—if people would have listened to him a few years earlier, we would be in a better situation. He is waiting to speak. I will read a few letters I have received.

Marianne from Lorain County, the county I live in, says: I am a single mom of a 4-year-old. I have been unemployed for over a year. I have never been unemployed before. I have worked since I was 15. It is a terribly difficult situation. I am at the end of my rope, not knowing what do I have to give up next. Do I have to give up my home, my car, my son's preschool. I am writing to ask you to push another unemployment extension, please.

How can that not be an emergency. How can they stand on this floor and say: Sorry, can't do it, just can't do the unemployment extension? This is exactly the kind of person who is so often afflicted by this situation. She works and she has worked since she was 15. She has a 4-year-old. She is making a choice: Do I give up my home? Do I give up my car?

I live in Lorain County. Unless you are lucky and you live in exactly the right place, you have a lot of trouble getting to work if you don't have a car. So we are going to say: You get rid of your car, but we want you to find work. Or if she gives up preschool, we know, by any measurement, if we are going to get this country competitive economically, internationally, and do what we need to do, we need to do better with education. The Presiding Officer understands that preschool education is such an important component for children for preparing for the future.

Let me read a second letter from Stephen from Tuscarawas County, a county south of Canton, west of Youngstown, a fairly small county.

Stephen writes:

I am a union electrician who started my apprenticeship in 1992. I have been an electrician ever since. I have never been at a loss for work until September 2009. As much as I

wish I didn't have to collect unemployment, I am terrified it will run out. I will have no means to take care of my family of five. I will have no idea what to do if that happens. I am the sole breadwinner for my family. My wife has had to have surgery twice in the past year and a half. She broke her knee and currently can't walk.

She is a mother of five and busy doing what she is doing taking care of this family. For many families, there are two breadwinners. In Stephen's case, with electrician's wages, he has had enough income for a wife and three children.

He continues:

I just ask that you take into consideration our situation. We need this extension.

I will not share other letters. I wanted to share those two from a single mother who has worked all her life, and an electrician in Tuscarawas County who has, for more than 20 years, been a well-paid union electrician. We know those are good jobs with good benefits and contribute a lot to our country.

I will close with this: Again, I plead with my colleagues, my conservative colleagues, put aside your ideology for a minute. Put aside your ideology that says that unemployment is welfare because it is not; it is insurance. People have paid into it. They should collect when they have paid into it and when they have done well; they collect from it when they have done badly. It is an American concept of insurance, social insurance, private insurance, whatever. Put aside your ideology, put aside your politics that you want to score points by saying: We will not do this because we have to "pay for it."

If they had shown us they cared a little more about the budget deficit 10 years ago, when we had a huge budget surplus, soon after the Presiding Officer came to the House—he was part of the effort that put a budget together and we had economic growth and we had a budget surplus. They took that surplus and put all that money to their contractor friends in Iraq and put all that money into drug companies and insurance company subsidies, put all that money into tax cuts for the richest Americans. Now they want to take it out on those people who have lost their jobs. It is unconscionable. It is not what the American people stand for. It is not American values.

I ask them to reconsider what they are doing.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KAUFMAN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TOO BIG TO FAIL

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, I have spoken twice on the floor in the past