

what ails you with over-the-counter remedies. My unemployment insurance was allowing me to keep a roof over my head, although incurring massive credit card debt for the remainder of my essentials—food, gasoline, eating. Most of us who are looking for work want to return to a normal life. Please pass an unemployment extension so we can continue to survive and maintain a degree of dignity. Allow us to rebuild our country and our economy. I know I am one of millions and my voice alone means very little. Please ask your fellow Senators to at least acknowledge us.

Think about what she said. She is obsessed with fear. Her future is uncertain. She has lost her unemployment. She has lost her job. She is not getting unemployment insurance now. She said she was brought up to believe in personal accountability, personal responsibility, and those values. She said: My unemployment insurance was helping me to at least get along, even though I was adding to my debt because unemployment insurance is never really enough to do all you need to do. She points out that, as most people do, she wants to work. She sends out resumes every week. You don't just get unemployment insurance by going like this. You get unemployment insurance by filing for it, showing that you are out of work. You have to show that you are searching for work, seeking work, and you can't find it in this economy.

Whether it is Rebecca in Crawford County or Barbara in Hancock County or whether it is somebody from Oregon, you don't just automatically get a job.

It is clear that it is hard to find work, and these are people who are out trying. If they are not able to find a job, they should be getting this unemployment extension.

Three more letters, briefly.

Georgetta from Warren County:

I am an unemployed single mother of two children, 10 and 14. I was laid off through no fault of my own. I have been doing what I can to secure a new job. I am about to lose my unemployment insurance. How can I feed my children? How can I keep a roof over their heads? What am I supposed to do? My savings are gone. I have no health insurance. I am trying to find a job. I can take the pain, but I can't sit by and watch my children suffer through no fault of their own. Please help me. Please pass an unemployment insurance extension.

I wish my colleagues who walk down into this well and, when their name is called, vote no—I wish they would meet people like Georgetta. I wish they would sit down with the Georgettas in their State and listen to their stories. I wish they would look at the pain in her face that she has because of her children suffering, not getting the food they need, the clothes, the books they need for school, not even sure she is going to have a roof over their heads. Think about that.

Again, I think we don't know very many people—my colleagues who vote against unemployment insurance, my guess is most of them don't know anybody who lost their job, lost their insurance, lost their house. My guess is they haven't thought through the con-

versation a parent has with a son or a father has with his daughter telling them the news that they are going to have to move out of their house, maybe move into a different school district, maybe just not know about the future because they are about to lose their home they have lived in for the last 5 or 6 years. What is that like for a parent to explain that to a child?

I ask my colleagues to try to empathize and try to put themselves in that position, when that conversation takes place, when parents have lost jobs and then health insurance and then their homes.

Joe from Pickaway County, south of Columbus:

I was laid off last year after working at a company for 13 years. I am still unemployed. I have lost my house, my car, my credit rating, and my liberty. I relied on unemployment benefits to feed my family. If UI is not extended, there will be people and families starving. Please do what you can to help us.

This is in another part of the State, southern Ohio, Appalachia, OH. Joe worked at a place for 13 years. The company laid him off. He is unemployed. He has lost his house and his car and he is struggling. If we don't extend unemployment benefits—even with unemployment benefits, his life is not going to be very easy, but without it where does he turn? What does he do? He goes to food banks. He lives on the street. What does Joe do in Pickaway County if we don't extend unemployment this week? He shouldn't be waiting any longer.

The last letter is from Amy from Hamilton County. That is where I was today, near Cincinnati. Amy is writing saying:

I am among the many Ohioans who lost their job due to the economic downturn that started 2 years ago. My husband and I did not live beyond our means. We bought a modest house. We lived reasonably on what we could afford. I encourage you to continue to push through passage of the UI extension. It will help pay for basic bills like our mortgage, food and utilities. UI is crucial to my family's viability. Please do whatever you can to pass the extension. We want to restore our basic way of life.

She is saying unemployment benefits would not make her life easy, would not even make her life comfortable in any way, but unemployment insurance would give her the bridge until she can, when the economy gets better, find a job.

I conclude by just saying again that I hope my Republican colleagues, who have consistently voted no on extending unemployment benefits and helping people keep their health insurance, will open their eyes and look around their States and talk to people, look at the mail they are getting, look at what they are hearing from constituents on the Internet and e-mails and try to put themselves in the shoes of a father who lost his job and his insurance and has to explain to his kids they lost their house or a single mother who was renting and can't even pay the rent because she has lost her insurance and she is

going to have to figure out how to explain to her children they will be in a different school district and they don't even know what it will be yet.

As people without jobs often do, they change from one school district to another one, and their kids fall farther and farther behind.

I ask my Republican colleagues who consistently vote no to try to empathize with those who have less privileges than we do, who don't have huge staffs and don't have a good salary and don't have good insurance and don't have a secure place to live, what their lives would be like if any one of us lost all of those privileges. I think it would make a difference in how they vote.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

(Mr. MERKLEY assumed the Chair.)

#### 2009 METRO ACCIDENT

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to mark a sad day for the National Capital region. On the eve of the 1 year anniversary of the deadliest accident in Metro's history, I would like to extend my deepest condolences to the families of the nine victims who perished on June 22, 2009. On that day around 5 p.m., a Red Line train collided with another train that sat stopped between the Takoma and Fort Totten stops as it waited for the Fort Totten station to clear. The first car of the moving train, an outdated model over 30 years old, sustained tremendous structural damage which resulted in significant casualties. As Virginian, this issue is especially important to me because 1 of the 9 victims who died—the train's operator—as well as 15 of the 80 people injured were fellow Virginians.

The unfortunate events of that day shed light on some glaring problems with our Nation's public transportation systems, and should provide us with a sense of urgency to accomplish the task of ensuring the safety of public transportation users.

Metro itself and its oversight agency—the Tri-State Oversight Committee—TOC—are both in dire need of reform. While it has taken steps towards addressing the problem, Metro needs to continue to make safety its top priority. Full analysis of potential hazards and safety concerns needs to be done, and Metro must start regimented data collection efforts so that safety problems can be tracked and prioritized. Top Metro executives—those with decisionmaking authority—need to be involved in critical safety conversations, and need to have the relevant information in their hands when making important safety decisions.

I am proud that we have been able to provide \$1.5 billion in Federal funds over 10 years to make capital improvements to Metro, but this cannot be a blank check. Replacing the outdated 1000 series railcars is a huge priority, and Metro is poised to sign the contract that will enable them to phase

out the older cars with newer, safer models. But more needs to be done. Metro needs to demonstrate safety improvements it has been making and ensure that it will continue to make safety its top priority if it expects continued financial support.

More broadly, this accident has highlighted that the safety of our public transportation systems should be a priority nationwide. We have been working in the Senate developing a legislative approach to ensuring proper safety standards are in place. Incredibly, FTA currently has no authority to regulate our Nation's transit agencies or develop national safety standards. A new draft bill developed by Senators DODD, SHELBY, and MENENDEZ will give FTA the tools to develop a national transit safety plan while also providing states the resources and flexibility to develop more robust transit safety oversight. The Banking Committee, of which I am a member, will soon consider this legislation and I am pleased that we are moving towards making progress in this area so that preventable tragedies, such as the one that occurred a year ago, will be a thing of the past.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SPECIALIST CHRISTOPHER W. OPAT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to pay tribute to SPC Christopher W. Opat, an Iowan who gave his life in service to his country as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was from Lime Springs, IA, and graduated from Crestwood High School in 1999. Christopher attended Iowa Lakes Community College before enlisting in the Army. He was remembered as a hard worker with a good sense of humor. Specialist Opat was serving his third deployment to Iraq. During his brief military career, he was twice awarded the Army Good Conduct Medal and also received the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, and the Overseas Service Ribbon. Our Nation is indebted to individuals like Specialist Opat whose tremendous sacrifice in defense of freedom must never be forgotten. The loss of such a dedicated, patriotic American is extremely sad and my prayers will be with Christopher's mother Mary Katherine, his father Leslie, and all his family and friends at this difficult time. I ask all my colleagues in the Senate to join me today in paying tribute to the courageous and selfless service of SPC Christopher Opat.

#### NOMINATION OF S. LESLIE IRELAND

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to urge the confirmation of Ms. Leslie Ireland, the President's nominee to be the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Intelligence and Analysis.

This is an individual who is well qualified, nominated to an important

national security position, and whose nomination has sparked no opposition or controversy to the best of my knowledge. Nonetheless, for more than 3 weeks her nomination has languished on the Senate calendar as Ms. Ireland has waited to be confirmed.

Let me speak briefly about Ms. Ireland and the position to which she has been nominated.

Leslie Ireland is a 25-year veteran of the Central Intelligence Agency. She has substantial experience in just about all aspects of the intelligence profession. Following a successful career at the CIA, her two most recent positions were that of Iran mission manager in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and as one of the President's daily intelligence briefers.

In both capacities, she has worked extensively with all parts of the intelligence community. As the President's briefer, Ms. Ireland has been familiar not only with the breadth of intelligence analysis the community produces, but also the policy context in which intelligence is used.

She worked directly for the Nation's premier intelligence consumer—the President. His evaluation of her professionalism and capability is reflected in the fact that he nominated her for this Senate-confirmed position.

As Iran mission manager, Leslie Ireland was given the responsibility over intelligence collection and analysis of what is perhaps our Nation's most challenging intelligence target. She oversaw, prioritized, and directed efforts to understand the Iranian government, nuclear program, military, and society. This is a position with deep management and analytic challenges.

Through Ms. Ireland's work as Iran mission manager, she was already well known to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence before she was nominated to be an Assistant Secretary of Treasury. She had appeared at numerous hearings and far more briefings, both for committee members and the staff.

Under the leadership of both of our past chairmen, Senators ROBERTS and ROCKEFELLER, the committee had an Iran study group to follow, oversee, and authorize intelligence activities with respect to Iran. The staff met often with Ms. Ireland, and I believe it was a productive relationship on both sides.

So it was no surprise that when Ms. Ireland was nominated on April 12, the committee moved quickly to consider the nomination. She was voted out of the committee on May 25 with the committee's unanimous support. She is ready to assume her new duties, and it is well past time for the Senate to act.

For the benefit of my colleagues, let me say a few words about the Assistant Secretary's position. It is a fairly new one, having been created in December 2003 in that year's Intelligence Authorization Act.

The Office of Intelligence and Analysis at Treasury has one foot within

the Department of the Treasury, assisting the Secretary and other senior departmental officials to set policies on sanctions and declarations.

A notable recent example is the effort by the Treasury Department to push, successfully, for the strongest international sanctions to date against Iran in United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 1929. Sanctions and international efforts such as this require careful analysis and are the product of intelligence designed to shine a light on the financial and other illicit activities of bad actors, including in this case the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps.

At the same time, the Office of Intelligence and Analysis has its other foot inside the intelligence community. Its personnel focus and help prioritize the financial intelligence collection efforts of those agencies that collect human, signals, and geospatial intelligence that analysts need.

The Treasury office also provides expertise on financial and economic matters that are necessary for broader intelligence community issues. For example, a recent issue of great interest is the financing of terrorist groups like al-Qaida and the militant and extremist groups with which they operate, like the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, and the Pakistani Taliban, the TTP. The Office of Intelligence and Analysis helps inform the intelligence community on this topic.

It is critical to understand the financial activities of these groups both to understand how they operate and to provide keys to disrupting them.

In Afghanistan, our troops face a well-funded Taliban enemy that relies on illicit funding for its lifeblood—and for the ammunition and improvised explosive devices that put our troops' lives at risk.

In the tribal areas of Pakistan, al-Qaida affiliated terrorist groups may be seeking to fund attacks on our homeland such as the unsuccessful car bomb attempt in Times Square. Among the most important impacts of the recent death of the third highest ranking al-Qaida figure, Shaykh Sa'id Al-Masri, is the anticipated loss to the organization's fundraising.

As North Korea continues its erratic violent behavior and considers a transition of power from Kim Jong Il to his son Kim Jong Eun, its economy has been further wrecked by a disastrous devaluation of the currency.

These are the issues that confront the Assistant Secretary of Treasury for Intelligence and Analysis. It is a position that has been vacant since September 2009. There is no excuse for that vacancy to continue another week. The Senate has before it a nominee who is well qualified to fill this role. She has the full support of the Intelligence Committee, and there has been no controversy or opposition to her throughout the confirmation process.

I urge the Senate to confirm Leslie Ireland.