

Depression was imminent. Those were truly scary days. The Recovery Act helped divert another Great Depression. It has our economy growing again. It has improved our fiscal situation. Imagine the size of our budget deficits if we had another Great Depression, which was an all-too-real possibility just over a year ago. Do you think these deficits are bad? Suppose we had the Great Depression.

We are now on the path to recovery, but it is a narrow ridge, not a broad field. If we do not keep our eyes forward, we will too easily lose our way. We have a fragile economic recovery that has been made even more so by the massive oilspill in the gulf and by serious fiscal and financial strains in Europe. We could have a double-dip. We could turn this around. This is a very fragile time for the economy. Given these perilous circumstances, we need to be vigilant to avoid another double-dip recession.

To conclude, the Recovery Act has done its job and will continue to do so. Now, as we get through this crisis, as this recession passes, we need to create new jobs. That is the key. It isn't enough to try to win back the jobs we lost. We have to do that. To keep pace with our population and keep a sacred promise to our children and grandchildren, we need to create a whole new generation of jobs.

As former President Clinton said in recent years: In the last 10 years, we were creating jobs in three areas—housing, finance, and consumer economy. Unfortunately, all three of these have suffered in this economy. All three of these have benefited from loose credit and easy money to build up a bubble. I am sorry to say that many of these jobs are not coming back, especially in the short term. We cannot look forward to the day or depend on the day where carpenters were scarce because we built more housing than people could afford to buy. We do not need a revitalized legion of clever bankers any more than we need another Starbucks one block closer.

Going forward, we need to transform our economy by revolutionizing how we produce and consume energy. To do this, we will need more scientists and engineers. It is in this area where future job and economic growth will happen. The Recovery Act, thank goodness, began this process, not only by turning our economy around but also by promoting green jobs and investment in clean energy initiatives. Our challenge in the future will be to build upon its foundation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland is recognized.

NOMINATION OF JOHN S. PISTOLE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the nomination of John S. Pistole to be Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration and talk about collective bargaining for TSA employees.

The TSA has been without a Senate-confirmed leader for a year and a half. During the last 5 months, we have experienced two major transportation security incidents: the unsuccessful December 25 bombing of Northwest flight 253 and the near escape of the failed Times Square bomber. I welcome the President's nomination of a career FBI official with extensive counterterrorism experience, FBI Deputy Director John S. Pistole, to head the TSA. I look forward to the Senate's swift confirmation of Mr. Pistole for this critical position.

During the confirmation hearings for Mr. Pistole, the issue of collective bargaining for TSA employees was raised. Mr. Pistole stated that he is going to study the issue, gather all the information he can from stakeholders, and make a recommendation to Secretary Napolitano.

Some Members of Congress, however, are strongly opposed to collective bargaining for TSA employees. Their opposition is grounded in the concern that we need to adapt quickly and effectively to specific aviation threats. The underlying premise of this argument is that we must choose between protecting the Nation from threats to aviation and collective bargaining. This choice, however, is a false choice because national security and what I call smart collective bargaining are not mutually exclusive. Under smart collective bargaining agreements, if circumstances and true emergencies were to exist, TSA would be fully capable to deploy assets without there being any negative impact from the collective bargaining agreement.

At his confirmation hearing, Mr. Pistole stated that "we have to be able to surge resources at any time . . . not only nationwide but worldwide." I certainly agree. A smart collective bargaining agreement would enable us to do exactly that.

Moreover, a smart collective bargaining agreement would enhance national security because it would enable TSA to recruit and retain veteran employees. Our Nation's history with labor unions teaches us that collective bargaining boosts morale and allows employees to have a voice in their workplace and increases stability and professionalism. On the other hand, poor workforce management can lead directly to high attrition, job dissatisfaction, and increased costs, which lead to gaps in aviation security. There have been reports that TSA has low worker morale, which can undermine the Agency's mission and our national security.

The fact is, DHS, Customs and Border Patrol officers, some of whom work at the same airports as TSA employees, as well as employees of DHS's Federal Protection Services, and the Capitol Police all operate under collective bargaining agreements. Are members of the flying public less safe because the CPB officers, who work side-by-side with TSA employees, work under a col-

lective bargaining agreement? I don't believe so, nor do I think my colleagues believe that. Are Members of Congress less safe because the Capitol Police work under a collective bargaining agreement? I have heard all my colleagues compliment the efficiency of our Capitol Police.

As the late Senator Kennedy noted in August 2009 when he cosponsored a collective bargaining rights bill for public safety officers, tomorrow morning, thousands of State and local public safety officers, police officers, and firefighters will wake up and go to work to protect us. We should be there to help them. They will put their lives on the line responding to emergencies, policing neighborhoods, and protecting us in Maryland and communities all across the Nation. These dedicated public servants will patrol our streets and run into burning buildings to keep us safe. No one believes for a moment that we are less safe because they have secured collective bargaining rights.

If opponents of collective bargaining for TSA employees want to invoke 9/11 to support their views, they will soon discover that the legacy of 9/11 shows clearly that national security will not be compromised by collective bargaining. It shows just the reverse. Those who helped us save lives during 9/11 were covered under collective bargaining rights. Before 9/11, the New York Port Authority police worked 8-hour days, 4 days on and 2 days off. By the end of the day on 9/11, however, vacations and personal time were canceled and workers were switched to 12-hour tours, 7 days a week. Indeed, schedules did not return to normal for 3 years. The union did not file a grievance, and everyone recognized it was a real crisis.

If there is any doubt about whether collective bargaining will enhance our ability to recruit and retain the best TSA employees to protect us, all we need to do is think about Donnie McIntyre, a Port Authority police officer, one of the many selfless heroes killed on 9/11, and these memorable words written in the third stanza of "America the Beautiful" by Katherine Lee Bates:

O beautiful for heroes proved, in liberating strife. Who more than self, their country loved, and mercy more than life.

We learned about the story of Donnie McIntyre from his partner, Paul Nunziato, vice president of the New York Port Authority Police Benevolent Association. He testified before Congress in June of 2007 regarding the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act of 2007, a bill almost identical to the amendment offered by Senator REID.

Donnie was one of the 37 port authority police officers who lost their lives on 9/11 at the World Trade Center evacuation effort. He was married with two children, and his wife Jeannie was pregnant with their third child when he died on September 11. While nothing will make up for the loss of Donnie to his family, Jeannie does not have to

worry about paying bills or providing health care for her children, largely because of the benefits the union negotiated for its members.

Collective bargaining for TSA employees will not endanger national security. It will make us more safe. I urge colleagues to support collective bargaining for TSA employees. It will improve our ability to recruit and retain the best employees, like Donnie McIntyre and the countless other American heroes who work every day to protect us and keep us safe under collective bargaining agreements. Moreover, smart collective bargaining for TSA employees will increase stability and professionalism in the workplace and will dramatically reduce attrition rates, job dissatisfaction, and increased costs, which will enhance transportation security.

I urge my colleagues to swiftly confirm John S. Pistole to be the TSA Director and to understand the importance of protecting all of our workers, particularly those who put their lives on the line for us, by giving them basic collective bargaining rights.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. GRASSLEY pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 562 are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Since I do not see any other Members present to speak, 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. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. today.

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

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

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HAGAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND COBRA BENEFITS

Mr. BURRIS. Madam President, near the end of May, we learned that the un-

employment rate in my home State of Illinois had fallen to about 10.8 percent, down from 11.2 percent in March. That is the first time the unemployment rate has gone down since 2006, when it stood at only 4.4 percent.

I am the first to celebrate the creation of even a single well-paying job. I am happy for each and every Illinoisan we can put back to work because one job will help someone put food on the table, and it will help one family stand just a little taller. It will give people the opportunity to participate in the economy again, buying the goods and services they need.

That, in turn, means more jobs. One by one, these folks will turn our economy around from the bottom up. So I do not dismiss this recent jobs report. This is a step in the right direction. It is welcome news. But it is only a drop in the bucket. For every person we have put back to work, many others are still hurting—and hurting badly.

Our landmark stimulus law, which we enacted more than a year ago, has done a great deal to stop the economy from collapsing and set Americans back on the road to recovery. The economy is growing again. Many key indicators have turned around. I am proud to say the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act has been instrumental in preventing a second Great Depression.

But job creation continues to lag behind. We have made progress in some areas, but we still have a long way to go. That is why I urge my colleagues to come together and support job creation measures so we can keep putting people back to work.

At the same time, I urge them to support further extensions of unemployment and COBRA benefits so we can help people keep their heads above water until the recovery is complete.

These are difficult times. Through no fault of their own, millions of people have suddenly found themselves without a job. These folks are the victims of reckless behavior on Wall Street, but they, rather than Wall Street, have been forced to pay the price.

More Americans are classified as "long-term unemployed" and "disadvantaged workers" than ever before. Many have exhausted their unemployment benefits or they are dangerously close to doing so.

I believe we must pass this extenders package and restore stability by helping States cover the rising cost of unemployment insurance.

We need to increase access to COBRA so that people can remain on their old health insurance for a period of time after they lose their jobs.

We need to extend these benefits to more hard-working Americans who are struggling to find work during this time of uncertainty.

Just last month, after a long partisan battle, we passed a temporary extension of these programs. But that extension expired on June 2, almost a month ago. So it is time to take up a new

measure that will carry unemployment benefits and COBRA through at least another 6 months—I would love to see more time—as our friends in the House of Representatives have discussed. This proposal would make more Americans eligible for existing benefits. It would not increase the current 99-week limit on these programs, but it would offer a helping hand to those who have lost their jobs recently and make sure they have access to the same resources.

This extension would not be a comprehensive fix, but it would help ease the situation and the strain on the victims of this financial crisis until the full effects of our stimulus law have taken hold and the unemployment rate begins to decline at a steady rate.

This extenders package will provide needed relief to those who need it most. That is why I am deeply disappointed that some of my colleagues have proposed cuts to this legislation. Some say we should cut \$25 a week in extra unemployment compensation.

Relative to the overall legislation, these cuts would be minimal. But to a family who has been hit hard by this crisis, \$25 a week could make a tremendous difference. Some will say we cannot afford to provide these benefits in light of our continued recovery. But what do I say? I say we cannot afford not to.

We cannot afford to nickel and dime these people who are barely scraping by as it is. We need to give them the support they deserve. Let's dispense with this hollow rhetoric about fiscal responsibility from those who have lost their credibility on this issue.

Over the last decade, Republicans squandered our surplus by spending wildly on massive tax breaks for the wealthy and the special interests, a war not paid for, and a medical program not paid for. During the years when they were in control, Senate Republicans voted seven times to increase the debt limit. They refused to pay for major initiatives, they cut revenue, and they increased spending.

It doesn't take a financial expert to recognize that this is just plain irresponsible. It is easy to say their record simply does not match their rhetoric.

Let's be honest with the American people. Let's work together to solve this problem rather than hiding behind the same irresponsible policies that got us here in the first place.

I recognize that job creation must remain our top priority, and I am confident that Democrats and Republicans can agree we need to help people get back to work. In the meantime, let's pass this extension so that folks can get food on the table and get access to the medical care they need. Let's stand up for those who have been hit hardest by this crisis and send them a message loud and clear: We haven't forgotten you and, hopefully, help is on the way.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

Mr. SPECTER. I ask unanimous consent that I may speak for up to 20 minutes.