

had never missed a payment on his home since he had bought it many years ago. He was going to this month because he was unemployed and couldn't find a job, and he had worked very hard to try to find a job. But now, like 14 percent of Nevadans, he is out of work and can't find a new job. There are just too many people looking for too few jobs. Now he cannot make his mortgage payment, as I have indicated.

He is the kind of person we need to keep in mind when we talk about creating jobs. His family is the kind of family we need to keep in mind when we talk about helping the unemployed with emergency aid. This man knows he will not get rich off his unemployment check, but it might help him keep a roof over his head.

Those unemployment benefits we are working to extend—for every job that becomes available, five people line up for that job. And for every \$1 we spend in unemployment benefits, \$1.61 is returned to the economy because that money is spiraled into doing a lot of good things because they can pay their rent, make their house payment, buy some clothes.

I repeat what I have said here before: Mark Zandi, who was, during the Presidential run, JOHN McCain's chief economic adviser, said the most important money we could spend right now is for unemployment benefits.

As to my friend in Reno, NV, his struggle, his fears—what keeps this man up at night—is what we should remember when the other side pretends this is more about politics than it is about people.

This work period, like every work period, will be about jobs—the work period here in the Senate—how to create them, how to save them, and how to prevent another crisis such as the one that killed them in the first place.

We are going to build on momentum we have already seen from the economic recovery plan, also known as the stimulus. This jobs crisis was not created in a day, and it will not be solved overnight. But in a short time, we have come a long way.

Three million Americans who are going to work today have the Recovery Act to thank for their jobs. In Nevada, the Recovery Act created or saved more than 4,000 jobs this spring, and as more projects get underway, it will create even more jobs this summer. And don't forget that the stimulus also cut taxes for families, small businesses, students, home buyers, and the unemployed.

But it is just a step, a first step. Over the next month, we are going to do everything we can to make a few more big steps. One of these steps will be to pass the small business jobs bill. It is now on the floor. We know the best way to create jobs, innovate, and help our economy recover is through the private sector. We know the engine that runs the private sector is made up of small businesses. These businesses are the ones that have felt the most

pain in this recession. Two out of every three jobs we have lost were from small business. Our bill, which is fully paid for, will put people back to work through a number of initiatives.

First, it gives small business tax incentives to help them hire and grow more people. Two, it increases Small Business Administration loan limits. Three, it makes it easier for small businesses to export goods. And four, it creates a small business lending fund that will give small banks more capital.

Another step we will take this month is the long overdue—it is long overdue; and I have talked about it a little bit this morning—extension of emergency unemployment insurance for so many who have been out of work for so long. It is more than 2 million people.

When millions of Americans lost their jobs, they lost their incomes, their homes, their savings, their gas money, their tuition payments, and on and on and on—all through no fault of their own. Democrats are not about to turn our backs on out-of-work Americans, which is why we are trying to help them keep their heads above water in this crisis.

The third step is Wall Street reform. It is just as much a jobs bill as the first two I mentioned. We all know greed on Wall Street is what triggered the recession, suffocated the job market, and robbed millions of their incomes. By cleaning up Wall Street, we are going to make sure big bankers can never again gamble away our economy. We are going to make sure there is not a next time.

Helping small businesses, helping the unemployed, and cracking down on Wall Street are three equally important approaches to the same problem—and to our No. 1 priority—jobs. But these three also have something else in common: A minority of Senators is standing in the way.

We have tried for months to help people. Nearly every Democrat has said yes, and nearly every Republican has said no. That opposition is stopping recovery in its tracks.

Every day we keep small businesses from creating jobs, or deny the unemployed the assistance they need, or let Wall Street get away with the same tricks that nearly sank our economy, we are making a difficult situation even worse. We are keeping people off payrolls, keeping businesses from hiring, and keeping our country from coming back stronger than ever.

Simply put, obstruction of these good bills is costing Americans jobs. The other side thinks saying “no” helps them. But it sure does not help the people we are supposed to represent.

I hope we will get our priorities straight this work period. It will be a productive one if we do. The next time we go back home to talk to our constituents, we will be able to deliver better news, and they will be able to tell us the same in return.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

RECESS APPOINTMENT OF DONALD BERWICK

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, ordinarily Senators come to the floor to talk about the things that happen in Washington while we are here. Today I wish to talk about something that happened last week while we were not here. I am referring, of course, to the President's truly outrageous decision to take advantage of Congress's absence last week to sneak Donald Berwick in as the new head of Medicare and Medicaid.

As is well known, Congress has a constitutional duty to examine Presidential nominees such as Dr. Berwick. But apparently the prospect of giving the American people an opportunity to hear this nominee defend his past praise for government-run systems that ration health care was worrisome enough for the administration that it sought to ignore congressional oversight altogether.

As it turned out, the administration's plan backfired because even Democrats are outraged at this blatant attempt to prevent the American people from hearing this man talk about what he plans to do with Medicare and Medicaid. As usual, the administration wants to blame Republicans for its failures. But in this case, the administration's failure to respect the right of the American people to study Dr. Berwick's record is being criticized by just about everyone, including the Democratic chairman of the committee in charge of reviewing his nomination.

Here is what Chairman BAUCUS said shortly after the appointment was made. Senator BAUCUS said:

Senate confirmation of presidential appointees is an essential process prescribed by the Constitution that serves as a check on executive power and protects Montanans and all Americans by ensuring that crucial questions are asked of the nominee, and answered.

So despite what the administration wants people to think, this recess appointment had nothing whatsoever to do with Republicans. The fact is, Republicans were looking forward to the debate. We welcomed the hearing on Dr. Berwick, and anyone who looks at the facts knows any suggestion to the contrary is utter nonsense. So the charge is laughable.

This appointment had everything to do with the administration's fear of letting Americans hear Dr. Berwick's well-known views about government-run care and about how he plans to implement the President's plan to cut \$½ trillion from Medicare while limiting the choices seniors now enjoy.

Here is the irony in all of this: In an attempt to silence debate about Dr. Berwick and its own plans for health

care, this nomination has only re-ignited the debate over the Democratic health care plan. By recess appointing a man who has sung the praises of the government-run British health care service, the administration is only inviting Americans to ask more questions about its own plans.

I would have thought that anyone would be able to understand the significance of getting answers from an avowed admirer of rationed care before putting him in charge of implementing this administration's \$500 billion Medicare cut.

But by denying the American people an opportunity to hear Dr. Berwick defend his past statements and his future plans, the administration is now forcing the Democrats who voted for the Democratic health care plan to defend Dr. Berwick and his views themselves. The administration may have shielded this nominee temporarily, but it has only exposed Democrats in Congress who voted for this bill and everything that follows from it—including this truly outrageous appointment.

This appointment is the latest evidence of how little the administration has concerned itself with the views of the public. When a majority of Americans and an overwhelming majority of Kentuckians opposed its health care plan, they cut deals with Democratic Senators to squeeze it through Congress. Now they are not even bothering with Congress. They are unilaterally installing people such as Dr. Berwick to take charge of its plan for $\frac{3}{2}$ trillion in Medicare cuts.

This has been the administration's approach all along: Go around the American people, and now go around Congress. The administration can try to blame Republicans for a debate they do not want to have. But by denying Congress the ability to scrutinize this nominee, it only raises Americans' suspicions about its health care plan and increases the burden on Democrats who supported it.

Back in March, Speaker PELOSI remarked that we would have to pass the health care bill to find out what is in it. This nomination is part of the same arrogant approach. The same administration that forced this bill on an unwilling public has now forced Don Berwick on to anyone with Medicare and Medicaid. Now Democrats who voted for this bill will have to answer for his statements and for his views.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period of morning business, with Senator permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Illinois.

HEALTH CARE APPOINTMENT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the speech which the Senate just heard from the minority leader on the Republican side is consistent with the Republican position on health care reform. They opposed it. They voted against it. They want it to fail. They do not want to give this health care reform a chance.

It is interesting that although they oppose health care reform, I have yet to hear the first Republican Senator come to the floor and suggest: Well, the first thing we need to do is to make sure we eliminate—eliminate—the tax credits and deductions for America's small businesses to help pay for health insurance that were part of the health care reform plan.

I have never heard them say that. They opposed the plan. Do they oppose the help we are going to give small businesses across America to afford health insurance for their employees? That is what repeal is all about.

Secondly, I have never heard a Republican Senator come to the floor and say: We want to repeal the \$250 check which will be sent to thousands of Americans currently under Social Security, Medicare prescription Part D, to help pay for the gap in coverage in the so-called doughnut hole. That was part of the health care reform plan. So those who come to the floor asking for repeal of health care reform obviously want to repeal this check for senior citizens. I have not heard that said one time.

I have also been waiting for the Republicans who want to repeal health care reform to stand before the Senate and say, honestly, openly: We want to eliminate health care insurance coverage for 30 million Americans who will have it for the first time in their lives—30 million uninsured Americans who will have health care insurance coverage because of health care reform. To repeal health care reform is to repeal that coverage for 30 million Americans.

I have yet to hear the first Republican come to the floor and say they want to repeal extending health insurance coverage and the peace of mind that comes with it. I am waiting for the first Republican who wants to repeal health care reform to stand before the Senate and say: We want to take away the power given in this health care reform to individuals so they can fight health care insurance companies that turn down coverage for families because of preexisting conditions. It happens every day in Illinois, in Oregon, in Arizona, in Kentucky.

The bill we passed gives American families a fighting chance against those health insurance companies. Those who are calling for repeal want to take away the power of families to fight for health insurance coverage when they need it the most.

I have yet to hear the first Republican who calls for repeal of health care reform go to families with kids in college and tell them: We oppose that provision in health care reform which extends family health insurance coverage for young people until they reach the age of 26. Those of us who have raised college-aged students know that is a blessing to have those kids—I call them kids—those young people under your family health care plan after they graduate from college until they reach the age of 26—a period of time when some of them are off taking a trip of a lifetime after graduation or looking for a job and do not have health insurance coverage.

I can recall calling my daughter Jennifer: "This is Dad. I am so happy you graduated from college. Do you have health insurance?" "Oh, Dad, I feel fine. You know, I'm healthy and strong." "No, Jennifer. You need health insurance."

The law we passed, the health insurance we passed, is going to give a family coverage to protect their kids until the age of 26. Those who want to repeal it want to undo that provision. But I have yet to hear them say that on the floor.

They have a different strategy. Senator DEMINT of South Carolina made it clear when the health care reform debate started that the purpose of the Republican effort was to defeat health care reform. In his words: We want health care reform to be Barack Obama's Waterloo in politics. He was very clear. They wanted the President to fail, they wanted health care reform to fail, and they still do. Their latest strategy was to stop the President from putting in place a person to run the program—someone who would try to make it work, someone who would look at the things we have done in Congress and make sure they work in the real world.

Last week, President Obama made a very sensible move, after waiting patiently for the Republicans to give us a chance to vote on a man to serve and to oversee Medicare and Medicaid as Administrator of CMS. His name is Dr. Donald Berwick.

CMS has been without a permanent Administrator since 2006, and it is time this important position be held and filled for the good of American families. This man, Dr. Berwick, is eminently qualified for this role. He is a Harvard pediatrician and policy expert who was committed to improving health care long before our debate started and who today is one of the foremost experts and leaders in health care quality and patient safety. The President appointed him last week when we were gone because my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, the Republicans, had made it clear they intended to elongate this debate on his appointment as long as possible, to rehash argument after argument instead of just giving us an up-or-down vote to let this man serve the Nation