

Shelby	Thune	Webb
Snowe	Udall (CO)	Whitehouse
Specter	Udall (NM)	Wicker
Stabenow	Voinovich	Wyden
Tester	Warner	

NOT VOTING—13

Begich	Landrieu	Sessions
Brownback	LeMieux	Shaheen
Gillibrand	Mikulski	Vitter
Hagan	Murkowski	
Kohl	Roberts	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Ohio.

EXTENSION OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the extension of unemployment benefits, something we talked about 2 weeks ago before we left town. It is something we talked about the week before that and the week before that. There has been a lot of talk, and there has been continued opposition from Senate Republicans.

I am incredulous that we have seen week after week after week—it has been 41 days since the Congress let unemployment insurance lapse. It was on June 4, 41 days ago. It is not because a lot of us didn't want to see it happen. It is because of an obscure—less obscure to the public than it was—60-vote rule. The Republicans did not just oppose the unemployment benefits extension—there are a couple of Republicans who voted for it, but of the 41 Republicans there was overwhelming opposition, virtually 90 percent of them—it is not just that they voted no. Let them vote no. They actually filibustered. They actually blocked us from even voting on the extension of unemployment benefits.

It is unfair to the unemployed who face a difficult job market through no fault of their own, and it is bad economics. We know Senator McCain, Presidential candidate McCain's economic adviser, among others, pointed out that money going out for the extension of unemployment benefits actually stimulates the economy better than any other dollars going into the economy. The money that goes to an unemployed teacher or an unemployed steelworker or an unemployed clerk or an unemployed computer programmer is money that is spent almost immediately because they have bills they have to pay. That money goes right into the community. We see a multiplier effect.

When the humanitarian response is to extend unemployment benefits, and the best economic policy response is to extend unemployment benefits, most of

my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—39 out of 41 of them, I believe—have voted no.

June unemployment was 9.5 percent. We know a year and a half ago 700,000 Americans lost their jobs; 700,000 Americans lost their jobs the month that Barack Obama became President. Things are better now. We are seeing job increases. In April, in Ohio, we had the biggest job increase of any State in the country: 37,000 new jobs. But that is not close to dealing with the unemployment brought on by the economic policies of deregulating Wall Street, cutting taxes for the rich, and not paying for anything—the war, the tax cuts, the bailouts to the drug and insurance companies in the name of privatizing Medicare.

Never before has Congress cut off benefits when unemployment was so high. Until recently, it has always been a bipartisan extension of unemployment benefits. Overwhelming numbers of Republicans and Democrats voted to extend unemployment benefits. I just keep trying to explain to my colleagues who vote no on the unemployment benefits extension that this is not welfare, this is insurance. People pay into the unemployment insurance fund and get benefits when they lose their jobs. At the same time, nobody gets these benefits unless they actively seek work; unless they are sending out resumes, doing interviews, going and visiting businesses, employers, whatever they can do to try to find jobs. Yet the Republicans continue to deny the extension for unemployment benefits.

Our workers deserve more than this crass political gamesmanship that an overwhelming number of Republican Senators are playing. July 1 was one of the busiest days ever at the Summit County Department of Jobs and Family Services. It was the first of the month, and because of Republican obstructionism—because they voted not just against extending unemployment benefits, they voted to filibuster our even considering these extension of benefits—because it was the first of the month and because of Republican obstructionism, this body failed to extend unemployment benefits. Staff members at the Summit County Department of Jobs and Family Services typically assist 300 to 400 clients a day. On July 1 twice that number were served by midday, and four times that number were seen by the close of business.

So a typical day of 300 or 400, 300-plus clients at the Summit County Jobs and Family Services turned into 600 before midday, and 1,200 by the close of business. The staff at the Department of Jobs and Family Services in Akron, led by Ms. Pat Divokey and County Executive Russ Pry, is doing everything they can to help working middle-class Ohioans. But when 90,000 Ohioans across the State are in need of an extension of unemployment benefits—90,000 people—it is time for this body to step up. Ninety thousand is a lot of people. It is almost hard to imagine.

I think what is important is to think about these 90,000 as individual human beings. I wish to share a handful of letters I received from Ohioans—just three of them—to put a human face on this issue. It is incredible to me to think about this many people who are so unsure whether they are going to have any money to feed their kids, to pay their mortgage and their utility bills in the weeks ahead because of the 60-vote rule, and this body has not been able to extend unemployment benefits because of a Republican filibuster.

Let me read a letter from Judith of Franklin County. It is the county where Columbus is located, the State capital.

I am very disappointed that the unemployment extension has not passed. I was laid off after working in my job for 20 years. I have a bachelor's degree and a master's degree and I have worked for 35 years since I graduated. I have never been without a job until now.

I understand the growing budget deficit, but what are working people supposed to do when we can't find a job?

These are not people who don't want to work. Whether they are in Albuquerque or Santa Fe or whether they are in Truth or Consequences, these are people who want to go to work. They are people who have worked their whole lives and are used to showing up to work. They can't find jobs. I hear this prattle from the other side of the aisle that this is some kind of welfare scheme. It is not. These people want to work. Most people who are filing for unemployment are people who, No. 1, have worked for years and, No. 2, continue to search for a job; they cannot get an unemployment extension unless they do.

The second letter is from Pat from the Mahoning Valley, in the Youngstown area:

I am a 25-year veteran of the accounting industry, but I was recently laid off.

My employers have paid into the federal and state unemployment funds for me for those 25 years that I worked.

And now for the first time I need to collect those benefits until I secure new employment.

While Congress plays political games, I have bills to pay and work to find.

Mr. President, he points out exactly this. He works in the accounting industry. He understands it. He understands that it is good economics to extend these unemployment benefits to people who lost their jobs, and he understands fundamentally that for the 25 years he worked for this accounting firm or for a number of accounting firms—I don't know whether Pat is a man or a woman, so he or she was paying—Pat's employer was paying into this insurance fund. So it is not welfare, in spite of what my Republican colleagues say.

You know, the other thing that is absolutely amazing in what Pat said and what Judith said about the growing budget deficit—the Presiding Officer was in the House of Representatives for several years representing a district in northern New Mexico. He saw year

after year when the Republicans didn't care about the budget deficit. They voted for hundreds of billions of dollars in spending for a war that I know the Presiding Officer and I both voted against that was not paid for. They voted for tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans that were not paid for. They voted for a giveaway to the drug and insurance companies—a bailout—in the name of Medicare privatization that was not paid for. Again, they voted for these huge government expenditures and charged it to our grandchildren and said it was OK. But now that it is the unemployed middle-class, working Americans who are laid off, they think we cannot do this because of the budget deficit.

What are their priorities of the Republican Senators who voted against the unemployment extension? They were willing to charge it to our grandchildren to fight the war in Iraq, they are willing to bail out the drug and insurance companies, and they were willing to charge it to our grandchildren when it came to tax cuts for the richest Americans. When it came to workers losing their jobs, they are not willing to move forward and help them. It is amazing.

The last letter comes from Jeff from Butler County, a conservative county north of Cincinnati in southwest Ohio, one of the most conservative counties in Ohio.

I worked at my job for 36 years till my employer shut down our plant recently.

All those years I paid into unemployment.

While I'd prefer to have a job and earn a decent wage, I now need unemployment benefits until that happens.

Think of the big picture. The people paying into the system should be the first to receive benefits.

Jeff is right. He understands that he paid into unemployment for 36 years, and now Republican Senators won't let him draw from that fund. I just don't get it when I think of what this does to people.

I guess I will close with this: I wish the Senators who voted no—and there are 41—on the extension of unemployment—we have had several votes and continue to fall 1 or 2 votes short—I wish they would sit down with a family and listen to them, not respond but listen to a family where workers lost their jobs; listen to the woman talking about losing health care, when she talks about telling her children that they are going to have their home foreclosed on and what are they going to do; explain to their children—they have teenage children, say—explain to them that Mom and Dad lost their jobs and their insurance, and now they have to move out of their house because they cannot afford it.

The children may ask: Where are we going to move?

They would say: We don't know that yet.

What school are we going to go to?

We don't know that yet.

That is why I come to the floor and read letters from people in Ohio. I wish

Senators would listen to people in their States. We get a lot of mail. We come across a lot of numbers and statistics. I wish they would pick up some of the letters they get. I know Senators all over this country are getting letters like this. There are very few States—maybe energy States or heavy agricultural States—that haven't been afflicted with unemployment the way California, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, New York, Florida, and so many States have. Maybe they don't understand. But those Senators from States that have high unemployment—and that is most of the country—I wish they would read their letters and hear what people are saying.

We are going to try again this week. I ask my colleagues to vote to extend unemployment benefits. It is morally the right thing to do in terms of economic policy. It is the right policy, and we should not wait any longer.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

REMEMBERING SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, on Monday evening I came to the floor and spoke from the heart about my friend Senator Robert Byrd. I wanted to take the opportunity to submit a more comprehensive statement about Senator Byrd and his legacy.

As I looked at his empty desk with flowers on it, I thought back to last summer when we lost another giant, Senator Ted Kennedy. And what distinguishes Senator Byrd, like Senator Kennedy, from others was his unbelievable, never-ending commitment to the people he represented and to this country.

It was never a question of Senator Byrd's length of service—though his was exceptional but rather his fierce sense of fighting for West Virginians. As he told the New York Times in 2005, "I'm proud I gave hope to my people."

Senator Byrd was, of course, the Nation's longest-serving Senator. And he was a legend, for sure. When I came to here, I learned firsthand that he always met with the incoming Senators, to give them an introduction to the rules of the road, the procedures and dignity of the Senate, and to share his rev-

erence for the Constitution. The image that I will always have of Robert C. Byrd is him reaching inside his suit pocket and bringing out the Constitution, which along with the Bible was what he cherished most.

Senator Byrd was a giant in the Senate and a champion for America's working families. We will miss his eloquence, his sharp intellect, and his passionate oratory.

He was one of our Nation's foremost historians of the Senate. He literally wrote the book on the Senate, a four-volume history. And he was not only an expert on the rules of the Senate, he was a fierce defender of its traditions and its role in our democracy.

Senator Byrd fought to make sure every American had a chance to live the American dream because he lived the American dream.

He was born in coal country in southern West Virginia, the youngest of five children. His mother died before he was a year old, and he was raised by his aunt and uncle on a farm with no telephone, electricity or running water.

He went on to graduate first in his high school class and married his high school sweetheart, Erma, to whom he was devoted throughout their 68 years of marriage until her death in 2006. To support his wife and two daughters in the early years, he worked as a gas station attendant, a grocery store clerk and as a welder in a shipyard during World War II.

A naturally gifted speaker, he was elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates in 1946 and to the West Virginia Senate in 1950. He won a seat in Congress in 1952 and his U.S. Senate seat 6 years later. He had such a passion for education that he remains the only American ever to earn a law degree while serving in Congress. President John F. Kennedy presented it to him at American University in 1963.

His career in Congress spanned 12 presidents, and he cast more 18,500 votes in the Senate. He was Senate majority leader, chairman of the Appropriations Committee and President pro tempore of the Senate. He fought every day to make life better for the people of West Virginia and for all Americans.

I can tell you, Mr. President, coming from the largest State in the Union, we have had our share of problems. We have had floods and fires and droughts and pests. And every single time, after every earthquake or storm or other disaster, Senator FEINSTEIN and I came to our colleagues to say that California needed the help of the U.S. government.

Every time we needed assistance, Senator Byrd, as the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, opened his doors and his heart to us, sharing his experiences and helping us in all of these cases when we were so in need. I am sure many of my colleagues can recount similar experiences. He was always there for us.

And I remember so well his leadership in trying to bring the troops home