

them, I think we have a way forward to get this done.

On the small business matter, we are pretty close to having an agreement. The Republican leader has to check with his people on a number of issues. I have to check with mine. But I think we are headed so that we can have a number of votes and complete that matter before we leave.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

#### RESPONSE TO THE RECESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the American people have run out of patience with Washington's response to the recession. The first response was a so-called stimulus bill that was meant to keep unemployment under 8 percent. But after borrowing \$1 trillion, unemployment is stuck well above 9 percent—some would argue closer to 10 percent. Now Democrats in Washington want to do it again.

Later on today, our friends on the other side will vote for a summer sequel to the original stimulus. A year and a half after the first stimulus, the seemingly unlimited spending continues.

You will recall the original stimulus was meant to be timely, targeted, and temporary. Yet here we are again, a year and a half later, and they are already coming back for more. The \$100 billion they got for teachers the first time wasn't enough.

Forget about the fact that more than a third of the original \$100 billion hasn't even been spent and that none of the extra money they are asking for has to be used to retain teachers. Our friends on the other side are now in the business of paying for States to hire more workers even if they can't afford it on their own. Why? Why? Because it creates a permanent need for future State bailouts, at a time when we can least afford it.

The same with health care spending: The original stimulus included about \$90 billion in additional Medicaid spending—funds that were said to be timely, targeted, and temporary. Yet here we are, a year and a half later, and they want billions more.

Let's be clear: This bill is a brazen attempt to funnel more money to public employee unions before an election at a moment of record deficits and debt, and to set the stage for a massive tax hike before the end of the year. It is time Democrats in Congress stop funneling billions of dollars to their favorite constituencies and asking the American people to pay for it with higher taxes. It is time they actually do something to address the jobs crisis in this country rather than using this and every other crisis as an opportunity to advance their vision of government without bounds.

Enough is enough. Democrats can say these bills are a response to the job crisis all they want, but the American people have already issued their verdict. The American people have seen the bitter results of the Democrats' so-called economic agenda. Every bill they pass only adds more burden on the people we need to get us out of this economic ditch. Whether it is the health care bill or financial regulation, every bill they pass seems to have as a prerequisite that it kill more jobs. If a bill doesn't kill jobs or make it harder to create them, they are not particularly interested.

When the centerpiece of your jobs agenda is to pass a bill that adds another \$34 billion to the national debt to get checks to millions of chronically unemployed Americans who can't find work in the climate you have created, then it is time for a different approach. The approach of the past year and a half isn't working. Unemployment has now been above 9 percent for more than a year. Yet Democrats can't seem to come up with anything other than to expand the size of government, transfer more Federal dollars to the States.

Americans are tired of their tax dollars being spent on more government, more regulations, more taxes, and more burden. They want new solutions that actually enable businesses to recover. Those are the kinds of solutions Republicans are offering and that Americans want.

#### IRAQ

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the President today announced his plans to transition the mission of our military in Iraq from combat to an advisory and assistance mission. For context, it is worth remembering that prior to the full deployment of this force, some Democrats were already declaring the surge the President is referring to today as a complete failure.

But thanks to the vision and the determination of General Petraeus, General McChrystal, and Ambassador Crocker, the counterinsurgency strategy was allowed to take root and to succeed. The population was protected, al-Qaida in Iraq was weakened, and, crucially, our political relationship with the Maliki government grew stronger.

None of this was easy. Between that brave decision to execute a counterinsurgency strategy, the surge, and the Anbar awakening, we had to prevail on many votes on timelines for withdrawal and fights over whether we would ever fund ongoing combat operations—all of which allowed for the strategic framework agreement and the security agreement between the U.S. and Iraqi Governments—by the way, executed in the previous administration—that outlined drawdown of forces and the transition of mission the President announced today. Of course, the Iraqis must work through the formation of the next government and continue to combat insurgents.

There are valuable lessons in all of this as General Petraeus works to build the Afghan security forces and defeat the Taliban. The surge in Iraq helped create the conditions that resulted in the security agreement between our two countries, which took a lot of hard work, and back in 2007, some—including the current President and Vice President—thought it could not be achieved. The credit, of course, goes to General Petraeus, General Odierno, our fighting forces, Ambassador Crocker, and our Iraqi partners. It is their sacrifice we should remember today.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

#### THE ECONOMY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I know we are all eager to return to our States next week to talk to our constituents. We have 1 more week to go. We hope to complete everything this week. I just outlined to the Chair and the Members listening about the heavy workload we have that we need to finish. We should be able to finish this week. That is what we all want, and we are going to do our utmost to do that. There are some matters we have to complete this week. We have an extremely important list of unfinished business.

Democrats have dedicated this work period, as in every work period, to jobs, putting the unemployed back to work, helping small businesses grow and saving jobs hanging in the balance. I am disappointed in my friend, the Republican leader, who has denigrated the work we have done and tried to do. Remember, because of the policies of the prior administration, 8 million jobs were lost. There is no dispute about that. In the last 6 months George Bush was President, we lost 3 million jobs. The economic recovery package—or the stimulus bill, as it is known—has created or saved at least 3 million jobs. That doesn't make up for the 8 million that were lost, but it is a step in the right direction.

Talk to anyone in the State of Nevada or any other State about the money in this recovery act that helped teachers. The reason there weren't huge layoffs last year is because of that bill. FMAP is the reason why there weren't more layoffs than there were—as a result of that money that went to States.

We have taken historic steps to clean up Wall Street.

We have made progress on an energy plan that will create hundreds of thousands of green jobs, lower consumers' utility bills, make sure BP pays the price for its disaster, and end our dangerous addiction to oil. It is not everything we wanted to do. It wasn't our first choice, but it is our first step, because we could not get any Republican support for an energy bill.

After a shamefully long fight, we finally extended unemployment insurance to the hardest hit victims of the

recession. I have said it before, and I will say it again. Mark Zandi, JOHN MCCAIN's chief economic adviser, has said that for every \$1 of unemployment money we send to the States, it creates \$1.61.

We passed other good bills too—for example, the HIRE Act. That was very good for business. I saw the fruits of that legislation in Nevada a week ago last Saturday. I went to a restaurant. All 24 people working there took advantage of the HIRE Act. What part of that bill did they take advantage of? They hired everyone who had been out of work for at least 60 days. They hired them for at least 30 hours a week, and they didn't have to pay the money for withholding. At the end of the year, they will get a \$1,000 tax credit for every one of those employees. They will get \$24,000 in tax credits for that small business.

The HIRE Act did other things. It extended the highway bill for a year, saving 1 million jobs. It also allowed those small businesses to write off purchases up to \$250,000 that they previously had to depreciate. It added money to the Build America Bonds, which has worked so well across the country.

I wish we could have done more. I wish our small business jobs bill, which we are working on now, could have passed when we brought it up the first time. It would create a lot of jobs. The Presiding Officer is one of those who have worked hard on that legislation. I think we see the light at the end of the tunnel. We should be able to get that done this year.

Having said all that, we have a lot more to do, and we acknowledge that. Unfortunately, most of what we have accomplished has taken longer than it should have. The minority has made it clear it will say no, no matter the question, no matter who suffers, and no matter how much of the American people's time they waste. These procedural votes we have gone through have been unnecessary. They have been only to kill time. At every turn, we have met more unprecedented and unnecessary delays from our friends on the other side.

Nowhere was that more painfully plain than the refusal to work with us last month on a bill that would have put half a million more hard-working Americans to work in small businesses. It would have helped those businesses get capital and get tax cuts and would have allowed them to hire and to grow. Karen Mills, the head of the Small Business Administration, has been traveling the country the last 2 weeks, alerting small businesses that we need to pass this bill so she can do some things to help small businesses. Right now, there is no money to do that.

I am very sad to report that this has not been the most bipartisan work period in Senate history. Quite the contrary. But it is still our responsibility to do right by our constituents. We still need to do that, and we still have time to do that, and I hope we can start today.

I hope we can come together and show the country that all Senators have at least one basic belief: we have to do all we can to make sure our children have teachers in the classrooms and police officers and firefighters on the streets. That is what the vote tonight at quarter to 6 is all about. We will vote in a few hours on that amendment that will keep teachers, firefighters, and policemen from being laid off, and it does that in a fiscally responsible way. It protects jobs while cutting spending elsewhere. Every penny spent with the vote at 5:45 will be paid for.

First, let's talk about teachers. The stimulus we passed last year kept hundreds of thousands of educators from losing their jobs. But as States continue to sacrifice education funding, school districts in Nevada and all across the country face the very real prospect of having to lay off thousands of teachers just weeks before the school year begins. Twelve hundred jobs are at risk in Nevada. Nearly twice as many teachers are at risk in Kentucky. In Kentucky, as many as 3,000 could lose their jobs as teachers. In California and Texas, those highly populated States, the number of jobs reaches over 10,000 for sure. All told, as many as 140,000 teachers could lose their jobs across our country. That would be tragic, especially considering we have the ability to prevent it.

Today's amendment would essentially extend the Recovery Act support that has worked so well—for teachers and for FMFP. States such as Nevada would get more than \$80 million to help keep teachers in the classroom, and every penny would be offset by cutting spending elsewhere. It is fully paid for and doesn't interfere at all with the Department of Education programs—for example, Race to the Top—or funding for charter schools or ongoing education reform.

But what is at stake today is not just teachers. They are not the only ones who lose out when they lose their jobs. We also need to think about the scores of students they teach, mentor, help, and inspire. When we vote to save teachers' jobs, we are also voting to save our students' future.

Second, let's talk about public safety. The Medicaid Program ensures that the poorest of the poor in our communities can afford to see a doctor when they are sick. We know how States have been hammered with people moving into the need for Medicaid—people losing their jobs. It has been so necessary that these Medicaid Programs include more people. But the program does a lot more than just that. It benefits everyone by stimulating the economy. It is a source of money that is spent all over a community—in doctors' offices, hospitals, and other places. When the States get this money, it is fungible and they can use it for other things.

But just as we see in education, cash-strapped States are looking for places

to save money. If they don't get the help they are counting on, if States don't get the money for which they budgeted, they are going to cut critical services such as police officers and teachers and firefighters. Nevada stands to lose as much as \$80 million. Again, Kentucky stands to lose twice as much, and California and New York stand to lose \$2 billion each. Across the country, \$16 billion is at stake.

That is what is in this simple legislation before us—simple but extremely important. But let's be clear. This vote, like the principle behind it, is simple. It is about saving jobs—not just to keep unemployment from growing but because of how important those jobs are in our society. When our children go back to school at the end of this summer, there should be a teacher standing in front of the classroom. Without this bill, there might not be. Our teachers strengthen our future, and the least we can do is secure theirs.

Another thing: This money is not going to go to a State unless the Governor asks for the money. That is what the legislation says.

When a crime is committed in our communities or a fire breaks out in a family's home, we all expect enough police officers and firefighters to be on call. Without this bill, they might not even be on the job. They always look out for us. The least we can do is look out for them.

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#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

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#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There will now be a period of morning business until 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Arizona.

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#### IMMIGRATION REFORM

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I would like to speak for a few moments about a memorandum that was received in the offices of Senator CHARLES GRASSLEY, pursuant to a request of the Department of Homeland Security, which has, unfortunately, raised a lot of questions about the administration's commitment to enforcing congressional law. It is undated, but the memorandum is 11 pages. It is on the stationery of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. It is a memorandum to Alejandro N. Mayorkas, the Director, from four individuals within the USCIS. The subject matter is described as "Administrative Alternatives to Comprehensive Immigration Reform."

After reading these 11 pages, I have to ask the question whether this administration, frustrated by the fact