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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, high above all yet in all, we thank You for Your steadfast love and faithfulness. Do mighty things through the labors of our lawmakers, using them to accomplish Your work on Earth. Lord, provide them with faith to confront perplexities and to remain unwearied, even during monotonous seasons. Keep them strong as they face life's demands and may they never let go of their dreams.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, February 23, 2010.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,  
President pro tempore.

Mrs. SHAHEEN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following leader remarks, there will be a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators able to speak for up to 10 minutes each. The Republicans will control the first half, the majority the second half.

Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message on H.R. 2847, which is the legislative vehicle for the jobs bill. Postcloture debate time expires shortly after midnight tonight.

I am hopeful and confident we can work out a reasonable time to vote on this; otherwise, we have to do it late tonight or very early in the morning.

Later today, I will ask unanimous consent for a 30-day extension of expiring tax provisions, including unemployment insurance, COBRA, flood insurance, and a number of other important issues. I hope we can clear that request later tonight or this afternoon. Senators, of course, will be notified if there are any votes scheduled.

Again, we have to finish this jobs bill we are on. We are going to move, as I explained last night, to the Travel Promotion Act, and then we are going to move to the big package I described a little earlier, which is so important to do. We will have to do the tax extenders, unemployment insurance extension for a reasonable period of time, along with COBRA. We are going to take a look at FMAP as something that needs to be done. We will discuss that in more detail when we get the timelines defined.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

### HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, as we meet here in Washington this week, unemployment continues to hover around 10 percent. Tens of millions of Americans are struggling to make ends meet. The national debt is at a staggering all-time high. In response to all this, the administration wants lawmakers to go down to the White House to talk about a health care bill Americans have already rejected resoundingly. The American people thought the debate on this approach to reform was over. They issued their verdict on the substance of the Democratic bills and the process that was used to force them on the public. Yet here we are, once again, being told by the White House we have to consider the same health care bills that caused such a backlash across the country in December. Democrats either aren't listening to the American people or they are going down the same road they have gone down again and again over the past year: put a bill together behind closed doors and then try to force it through Congress along a party-line vote and ultimately onto a public that doesn't want it.

Americans don't want to be told what is best for them. They call the shots. What they are telling lawmakers in Washington to do on health care is to stop and start over. They want us to put the old bills on the shelf, pull out

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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a clean sheet of paper, bring all the parties together, and start over.

They are telling us they want a new bill. It is no wonder, since the bills we have seen would slash Medicare, increase taxes, and lead to higher insurance premiums. You could call this kind of approach many things, but you can't call it reform. Americans want real reform. That is what I had hoped Thursday's meeting at the White House would present, an opportunity for us to share the best ideas and work together on commonsense solutions. I am disappointed the White House seems to view it instead as an opportunity to simply restart where we left off in December. Americans don't know how else to say it. They are not interested in reform that starts with either of these two bills. The American people have been quite clear about that. They are not interested in reform that starts with either of these two bills.

If you think they are mad about the process they have seen so far, wait until Democrats in Washington completely ignore them and try to jam these bills through one more time. People aren't interested in so-called reform that raises costs instead of lowering them. They are not interested in massive cuts to Medicare. They are not interested in new taxes at a time when we are already struggling. They are not interested in a government-run health care system that will inevitably lead to delays and to rationing. They want step-by-step reforms that address the core of our problem, which is cost, not grand government schemes that only expand existing problems, increase our debt, and extend the reach of government further and further into our lives.

Reform is necessary. Unfortunately, it seems Washington Democrats are so wedded to their own flawed vision of reform that they would rather have nothing at all done about health care than to implement the kinds of changes Americans want.

When it comes to solving problems, Americans want us to listen first and then, if necessary, offer targeted, step-by-step solutions. Above all, they are tired of a process that shuts them out. They are tired of giant bills negotiated in secret, then jammed through on a party-line vote in the middle of the night. It should be clear by now, Americans are tired of grand schemes imposed from above. They have been telling us exactly that for an entire year. Incredibly, our friends on the other side still don't seem to get it. But Americans see what is going on, and that is why they will reject this bill one more time.

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 be a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half.

The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

#### JOBS LEGISLATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise to address the jobs issue and the bill before the Senate. Part of it is to show to my fellow Senators and the American people that the Democratic leadership has a different view on this bill before us that is a partisan bill, particularly in regard to the absence of tax extenders being in that bill, compared to what they have over several of the recent years, which was very supportive of these tax provisions that are left out of this bill. I will explain it this way.

Although the Senate Democratic leader was highly involved in the development of the bipartisan bill, he arbitrarily decided to replace it with a bill now being jammed through the Senate. From the start, this was something Senator BAUCUS and I were working on with both leaders of the Senate. Somehow, that didn't seem to work in the end, as we thought it was working very well as we were moving along. As much as I was surprised by the Democratic leader's disregard for bipartisanship, I am even more surprised by the explanation given by him and his people who speak for him.

Perhaps the most significant change between the bipartisan package Chairman BAUCUS and I helped put together and the package we voted to move to is the package of expired tax provisions has been removed. These expired tax provisions are the ones I referred to as tax extenders. These generally very popular and certainly bipartisan tax extender provisions have, in fact, been extended several times over the past few years. What is surprising is that hyperpartisan members of the majority have suddenly somehow decided tax extenders are what they refer to as "partisan pork for Republicans." A representative sample comes from one report which describes the bipartisan bill as "an extension of soon-to-expire tax breaks that are highly beneficial to major corporations, known as tax extenders, as well as other corporate giveaways that have been designed to win GOP support." Like this is something that only Republicans have ever been for or it is just for major corporations.

There is another quote in the Washington Post which includes this attribution to the Senate Democratic leadership:

"We're pretty close," [the majority leader] said Friday during a television appearance in Nevada, adding that he thought "fat cats" would have benefitted too much from the larger Baucus-Grassley bill.

Understand, Senator BAUCUS is a Democrat, I am a Republican. The portrait being painted, then, by certain members of the majority, echoed without critical examination by people in our press, is wildly inaccurate. For one thing, the tax extenders include provisions such as the deduction for qualified tuition for college and related expenses and also the deduction for certain expenses for elementary and secondary schoolteachers. That ended December 31. It is going to mean tax increases for these families if we don't reinstitute it. If you are going to college or if you are a grade school teacher, the Senate Democratic leadership thinks you are a fat cat, so you are on your own. If your house was destroyed in a recent natural disaster and you still need any of the temporary disaster relief provisions contained in this extenders package, too bad, because helping you would amount to corporate giveaways in the eyes of some around here.

The bipartisan package that was shelved included an extension of unemployment insurance and also a COBRA health insurance extension. Do these provisions benefit corporate fat cats? The answer is obviously no. Therefore, the common, ordinary person, Main Street America, smalltown America or big city America, the working people of this country, that is who will benefit from those provisions that are left out of this bill.

The tax extenders have also been routinely passed and repeatedly passed because, in fact, they are and have been bipartisan and have been very popular and have been very beneficial to the economy. Democrats have consistently voted in favor of extending these tax provisions. Let me as an example refer to House Speaker NANCY PELOSI, who released a very strong statement upon the House package of tax extenders in December 2009. Just 6 weeks ago, the other body passed these tax extenders. This is what the leader of the Democratic Party in the House had to say in December 2009, not very long ago: that it is "good for business, good for homeowners, and good for our communities."

In 2006, the then-Democratic leader released a blistering statement:

After Bush Republicans in the Senate blocked passage of critical tax extenders [because] American families and businesses are paying the price because this Do Nothing Republican Congress refuses to extend important tax breaks.

Recent bipartisan votes in the Senate on extending expiring tax provisions have come in the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006, which passed the Senate by unanimous vote, and the Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004, which was originally passed in the Senate by a simple voice vote,