

friend, the Senator from Kentucky, would reconsider. His point has been made. It has been adequately made. I would hope he would let us proceed on this because it is more than meets the eye. We have people lined up all over the country in unemployment lines who would not be there but for this.

I would also say it is broader than even that. As my friend mentioned, we have problems with doctors who are now refusing to take Medicare patients.

We have a bill that is on the floor now in which we are going to try to make a long-term decision soon on this. I have offered my friend from Kentucky a right to vote on this—I would be happy to have a vote on this—that it be paid for. But it is really not appropriate to object without even allowing the Senate to work. We talk about voting. That is why we need to vote.

I say to my friend from Kentucky, you have made your point. You have made it well. I understand how you feel that this should be paid for. The majority of the Senate disagrees with you. Let us either vote on that or withdraw your objection.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. BUNNING. There is. I object. And let me—

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following any leader remarks, there will be a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each. The Republicans will control the first half and the majority will control the second half. Following morning business, the Senate will turn to executive session to consider the nomination of Barbara Keenan to be a U.S. circuit judge for the Fourth Circuit, with the time until 12:15 p.m. equally divided and controlled between Senators LEAHY and SESSIONS or their designees. At 12:15 p.m., the Senate will proceed to a cloture vote on the nomination. That will be the first vote of the day, unless something comes up in the interim that necessitates a vote.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Mr. REID. Madam President, just a few words on what has been happening here recently. Certainly, there is an emergency. Our economy is suffering. There is not a State that is not hurting. Some States are hurting worse than others. This is a filibuster, and we are in the middle of a very important piece of legislation. I do not think it would be appropriate to take 10 days—is what it would take, a week or 10 days—to try to get a 30-day extension when we have all these other things that are waiting to be done that relate directly to this. It just is not appropriate.

What is a filibuster? If you look in the dictionary, Madam President—this was handed to me by the distinguished Senator from Michigan, Ms. STABENOW—if you look in the Oxford English Dictionary, a filibuster is a “freebooter. One of a class of piratical adventurers who pillaged the Spanish colonies in the West Indies during the 17th century.” A freebooter is “one who engages in unauthorized and irregular warfare against foreign states. A pirate craft.” In the United States: “To obstruct progress in a legislative assembly; to practice obstruction.” That is what this is all about—to practice obstruction. We are not preventing a vote. We are not preventing a vote. We want a vote to take place.

My friend from Kentucky has raised an issue. He thinks it should be paid for. I believe it is an emergency, as it always has been when people are out of work for long periods of time. It is an emergency. We should be able to vote on what the Senator feels is appropriate; that is, that this be paid for, that it is not an emergency. These long lines of people who are out of work is not an emergency is what he believes. I believe they are.

I think it is terribly inappropriate that this filibuster is being conducted. And to even make it worse, Madam President, we have people coming defending my friend from Kentucky. I will defend him on a lot of things but not on this. I think it is very out of line.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

HEALTH CARE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, the American people have spoken loudly and clearly on the issue of health care reform. They overwhelmingly favor a plan that addresses our problems step by step. They want a plan that lowers the cost of health care without expanding the role of government and without raising taxes or cutting Medicare. They want us to focus on cost.

Unfortunately, Democrats here in Washington either have not gotten the message or they are ignoring it. We know this because after a year of protests, three statewide elections in New Jersey, Virginia, and Massachusetts, and the clear verdict of every public opinion survey, Democrats in Washington are now planning one last-ditch effort to get their plan through Congress and past the American people.

The sad fact is that Washington Democrats are so wedded to the notion that they know better than the general public when it comes to health care that they are about to reject any pretense of bipartisanship in order to jam their plan through Congress by the

narrowest margin possible whether people want it or not—a raw exercise of legislative power that Senator BYRD, our resident Senate historian, has described within the last year as an undemocratic outrage on a piece of legislation this far-reaching.

Some on the other side are clearly worried about the consequences of taking such a drastic step. They are wondering whether they should risk the full fury of the public by using these extreme tactics to circumvent the will of their constituents. Democratic leaders are telling them not to worry. They are telling them people will forget about the process once their plan becomes law. Well, they are wrong. Americans are not going to forget if Democrats do this to their health care system.

Wavering Democrats need to realize that there is a better way. Last week, the President and other Democrats acknowledged a number of areas of agreement between the two parties. These are the ideas that could form the solid basis of a fresh start on health care reform. These are the ideas that could form the basis of the kind of step-by-step bipartisan reform Americans really want.

Americans do not want the one-party bill Democrats in Washington are planning to force on them, or any variation of it, and they do not want Democrats to push it through with even more backroom deals. Americans are already seething about the kinds of deals that were used to get the earlier version of this bill through Congress. The “Cornhusker kickback” and the “Louisiana purchase” became household expressions. But using reconciliation to jam this health care plan through would make the “Cornhusker kickback” look like an exercise in good government.

Using reconciliation to fundamentally change the health care of every American would be one of the most brazen single-party power grabs in legislative history. It would be the death of bipartisanship. And Americans will not stand for it. They know bills of this scope only work if they are done along bipartisan lines.

Medicare and Medicaid were created with the support of about half the members of the minority party. The Voting Rights Act passed with 30 Republican and 47 Democratic votes. Only Six Senators voted against the Social Security Act. Only eight voted against No Child Left Behind or the Americans with Disabilities Act. Only 12 voted against the Welfare Reform Act. Big bills are passed with big majorities, and rarely has there been a bigger bill than that. So if ever there was a time not to depart from a bipartisan approach, it is now—right now.

Democrats are saying they want a simple up-or-down vote on health care. What they want is to jam their vision of health care through Congress over the objections of a public they seem to think is too ill-informed to notice. If

they go ahead with this plan, they will see how wrong they are. I know the argument has been made by the leaders on the other side: Let's get this issue behind us; it will get better. If they pass this, it will not be behind them; it will be in front of them—right in front of them. Americans are engaged in this debate in a way I have never seen in my entire career here. They know exactly what is going on. They will make sure their voices and their will is felt one way or another.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period of morning business for 1 hour, 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 Kentucky is recognized.

BIPARTISANSHIP

Mr. BUNNING. Madam President, I wish to respond to the Democratic leader, particularly in view of what my leader just said about bipartisanship.

It seems that last week there was a bipartisan agreement between the members of the Finance Committee on the very issue the Democratic leader spoke on. It was called the Baucus-Grassley compromise bill. It never got to the floor of the Senate. That was a bipartisan bill that was set aside for a very partisan bill that Senator REID brought to the floor and rammed through instead of the bipartisan bill, which had all these extended benefits included in it: extended unemployment benefits, COBRA health care assistance, flood insurance, highway bill assistance, the Medicare doc fix, small business loans, distant network channel for rural satellite television, and other things.

It is hypocritical of the Democratic side of this aisle passing a pay-go bill. What does pay-go mean? It means you pay for the bills as they appear on the floor of the Senate. Then, to present a bill that is not paid for or just paid for a little bit—one-third of it is paid for—and that was the Reid jobs bill he presented to us. Five billion dollars was paid for; ten billion dollars was not. Then, immediately follows a UC, which is not—which is not—something we normally do. We have unanimous consents that are much different than this. This is a House bill they have asked unanimous consent to proceed on. Regular order could prevail and the leader of this Senate could put this bill

under cloture and get his vote. He will get his 60-plus votes and normal procedure will occur. That is the normal way to deal with this bill.

Just so my colleagues understand that not all Americans feel the same as my dear friend from Maine and the majority leader of the Senate, I am going to read a letter into the RECORD from a constituent of mine from Louisville.

I am going to read it also because it is very important people understand there are other sides of this.

Dear Senator Jim Bunning:

I haven't worked a full 40-hour week in probably 2 years now, but I fully support your decision to stand up to those in Congress who want to do nothing more than to spend the taxpayers' money, even the money they do not have, on unemployment extension benefits.

So far this year I have worked a total of one week here in Louisville, Kentucky. My employer is a sheet metal fabrication plant with its main headquarters based in Cincinnati, Ohio. Normally the Louisville branch would employ upwards of fifty people on any given day if business were good. Recently that number has dwindled to about four.

This country is sooner or later going to implode because of the massive amount of debt run up over the past 40 to 50 years. Selling the Nation's soul to countries like Communist China in order to finance our life style and allow the government to further debase the currency is sheer lunacy. Throwing away hundreds of billions of dollars so executives on Wall Street can keep their multi-million dollar bonuses while others in society worry about keeping the electricity on and their children fed only helps to move this country closer to a long overdue revolution. The problem is by then we won't even own it anymore.

Politicians, on both sides, enjoy getting up in front of television cameras and talking about their support of the "pay as you go" plan, but when it comes down to actually doing what they say, they all run for cover and vote for anything they think will win them another vote or another term. Your stance in holding them to their words and expecting them to actually do what they voted for is a refreshing concept in an otherwise corrupt and hypocritical power base known as Washington, DC.

It is too bad Senator Mitch McConnell and some of the elected officials on your side of the aisle do not have your backbone or your sense of decency when it comes to keeping their promises to the American people.

For security's sake, I am just going to read his first name. It says: Sincerely, Robert, from Louisville.

There is no doubt in anybody's mind that I have supported extension of unemployment benefits, COBRA health care benefits, flood insurance, the highway bill. I was the one who proposed the Medicare doc fix on a permanent basis in the Finance Committee. I have supported small business loans and all the other things that are in this temporary bill.

I wish to set the record straight. The majority leader has all the tools in his kit and he normally exercises them and I think he is about to do that on the bill currently before us, which we call the large jobs bill. He soon will invoke cloture to cut off debate. He normally doesn't even allow amendments. He

will file cloture, fill the tree—by filling the tree, that means the amendment tree which allows the Republicans no alternatives but to vote for cloture or not vote for cloture—and then, unfortunately, we have 30 hours of debate immediately following cloture.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST

I am going to propose, one more time, my unanimous-consent request.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 4691; that the amendment at the desk which offers a full offset be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read for a third time and passed, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I am sorry my friend from Kentucky has made this so personal because it shouldn't be the case, but let me review history a little bit.

The Senator from Kentucky talks about the bill we voted on and passed last week as being very partisan. That bill received 70 votes. It was a very nonpartisan bill. I should say it was a bipartisan bill. It received 70 votes. Why did it receive 70 votes? Because it did some great things for America. It extended the highway bill for 1 year, saving 1 million jobs. It gave small businesses the right to write off \$250,000 in purchases, stimulating small businesses all over America. It gave employers the ability to hire people who have been out of work for 60 days, and if they hired them, they wouldn't have to pay their FICA tax if they gave them 30 hours a week. Not only that, they get a \$1,000 tax credit at the end of the year. This is a good proposal. We also extended Build America Bonds, which are so important to the American Recovery Act, and Democrats and Republicans all over the country—Governors, mayors, county commissioners—loved that proposal. So it was certainly not a partisan bill. He is right. The other bill he talked about wasn't brought to the floor. I would also say this. It was paid for. Not a cent of deficit spending—not a cent.

It is interesting my friend would talk about pay-go. He voted against pay-go. He is talking about pay-go now. He voted against it. He voted against it right here on the Senate floor. If he so likes pay-go, why didn't he vote for it? He voted against it. The Senator from Kentucky voted against pay-go. It has no applicability to the jobs bill that passed because it was paid for.

The doc fix, he talks about having voted for it in committee. He voted against it on the floor.

So my friend is throwing around words such as "hypocrite." People can make their own decision as to who is a hypocrite. I am not calling anyone a hypocrite, although I am just stating the facts: Someone who boasts about the good of pay-go but votes against it