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Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 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.

Almighty God, source of all life, give our lawmakers this day Your grace and wisdom. Because of Your grace, may they find such inner peace that it will prompt them to reach out to one another and accomplish great things for Your glory. Because of Your wisdom, may they face today's challenges with confidence, knowing that You order the steps of good people.

Lord, give all who labor on Capitol Hill a special discernment to know and to do Your will. Remove their strain and stress and let their ordered lives confess the beauty of Your peace. We pray in Your sacred 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. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 7, 2011.

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.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, 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. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, yesterday, I came to the floor to call on Democrats in Washington to wake up, to open their eyes to the signs we see all around us that the policies of the past 2 years are making our economy worse.

Home values are still falling. Manufacturers are showing the weakest growth in nearly 2 years. Nearly 14 million Americans are looking for jobs and can't find them. For many, there is a nagging feeling that things will actually get worse before they get better. And who can blame them?

Over the past 2 months, two ratings agencies have come out with dire warnings over the status of America's stellar credit ratings out of fear that we don't get our fiscal house in order.

One has already put our rating under review and the other has threatened to do so if we don't do something in a matter of weeks—weeks. Yet Democrats here in Washington are doing nothing.

The President is patting himself on the back for an auto bailout that is expected to cost the taxpayers billions. And Democrats in Congress would rather talk about an election that is a year and a half away.

For 2½ years, Democrats in Washington have paid lip service to the idea of job creation—even as they have relentlessly pursued an agenda that is radically opposed to it. And the results speak for themselves: an annual deficit three times bigger than the biggest deficit we ever ran during the last administration, a national debt that we now know will this year be greater than our Nation's entire economy, and chronic unemployment.

But here is the other problem: Democrats don't want to admit that the government-driven policies of the past 2½ years are part of the problem. And until they do, nothing will change. Unless Democrats change their priorities and their policies, the threats of a downgrade will not go away. The debt will not get any smaller. Businesses will not create the kinds of jobs we need to build prosperity.

We need to change course. And a good place to start is with trade.

The President himself has explicitly acknowledged in front of the cameras that free trade agreements will create tens of thousands of jobs for American families who need them. Yet now, the President's advisers say that the White House plans to hold off on this bipartisan job-creating initiative unless it can spend more money on a government benefits program first.

At a time when 14 million Americans are looking for work, they actually want to hold off on these known job-creating agreements in exchange for a green light to spend more money.

It is astonishing. I mean, how do you explain to an American manufacturer or farmer that they have to lose business to France because some Members of Congress want a better benefits package for their allies in organized labor?

You cannot. The White House is free to advocate on behalf of unions. That is its prerogative. But this time it has gone too far. When the White House is

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



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actively depriving others of jobs because some union boss isn't getting his way, it has lost touch.

So this morning I am calling on the administration once again to send us the three pending trade agreements that the President himself has said would create tens of thousands of American jobs—and to leave trade adjustment assistance out of it.

There are 47 duplicative Federal retraining programs out there for unemployed workers. No one is denying or minimizing the hardships they face. But we will not allow the White House to deny one group of people the chance to get a job in order to have a bargaining chip in negotiating benefits for others.

It is not fair, and it is not right. We need to separate these issues, deal with them independently, and move ahead with these trade deals. And we should also be doing even more to create jobs by moving forward with something that has been a cornerstone of good trade policy in this country since 1974. I am talking about trade promotion authority.

If the President is really serious about doubling U.S. exports and creating the jobs that would go along with it, he should call on Congress to approve trade promotion authority and Congress should do it.

I would also suggest that any discussion of trade adjustment assistance be done only as part of the debate over extending trade promotion authority, the way it's been done for decades.

Trade promotion authority would give the President the ability to negotiate job-creating trade deals—and allow them an expedited procedure to get an up-or-down vote in Congress so that opponents couldn't block the deals or amend them on behalf of parochial interests or as a shortsighted favor to their union allies.

Without the protections afforded by trade promotion authority, Congress may never consider another trade deal again, and there will be no more trade agenda.

American businesses want to expand and hire. Here is one way to help them do it that's right in front of us. There is no excuse for inaction.

Madam President, 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. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in morning business for an hour, with Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half.

Following that morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 782, the Economic Development Act. The Senate will recess from 12:30 until 2:15 to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

We will begin consideration of the EDA bill as soon as we can, which appears to be tomorrow morning when cloture is invoked.

JOB CREATION

Mr. REID. Madam President, as I was doing my exercise this morning, I heard on the news the announcement that 10 years ago today, when President Bush—I could hear his voice celebrating the tax cuts for the wealthy—said: I know we have these huge surpluses, but these moneys are the people's money and, therefore, he was going to do something about it. He did that big time.

He certainly did away with those huge surpluses we had, which amounted to trillions of dollars. He did it in a number of different ways. We had a program developed during the Clinton years called pay-go. That meant if someone had a new program they wanted to initiate, they had to pay for it either with new revenue or take money from an existing program. It worked extremely well. That is one reason, and one of the main reasons, we were able to develop the huge surpluses we did during the Clinton years. We were paying down the debt in the Clinton years. Some said it was too quickly.

Well, another way that the President got rid of that huge surplus was the war in Iraq and the war in Afghanistan. The war in Iraq alone now is estimated to be about a \$1½ trillion—all borrowed money.

We also know how important it is to create jobs. Now, as a result of the President finding himself in a huge hole as a result of the policies of the Bush administration, he decided that something had to be done. We passed the Economic Recovery Act. It created millions of jobs and saved millions of jobs. Was it enough? No, but it was the best we could do. We could only get three Republicans to help us on that. I appreciated their support, and I always will. They were Senators SNOWE, COLLINS, and Specter. They determined what we could spend and not spend within certain parameters, and we believed there should be more infrastructure spending. I wish we could have done more. So we have done some things to help significantly the hole that President Bush created for us.

Now this Congress has also done some things. We focused on jobs. We know how important jobs are. Regarding the FAA bill—Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization—we extended that short term 19 times. I talked to Randy Walker, head of McCarran Airport, the sixth busiest airport in America. They can't let contracts for runway repairs because they only have 1 month to do it a lot of times. They cannot do that.

All kinds of projects that would create thousands of jobs around American airports would happen if we could have an FAA bill. We passed it here. It has been held up in the big dark hole of the House of Representatives. Nothing has been done. We haven't been able to complete the conference on that, and the 280,000 jobs either created or saved haven't been completed. That has been months and months.

We have an antiquated air traffic control system in America. We want to improve it. That is what it is about—saving and creating jobs.

We believed it was important to do something about patents. Senator LEAHY has been faithful in reporting bills out of his committee, and we finally said bring it to the floor. After a lot of work, we got it done. More than six decades have lapsed, and we haven't done anything with one of the most important things we can do, which is protect our patent system and make it better. We passed it here and sent it to the House. Nothing has happened. They have not voted on that bill.

That is very unfortunate, that we have not been able to get those two bills. The patent bill is 300,000 jobs and the FAA bill 280,000 jobs. The math is pretty simple. That is a lot of jobs, and that has been held up.

We believed it was extremely important that we do something about jobs, and we did that with something that has worked so successfully in the past. So that is the bill we brought to the floor to help small businesses innovate, invent, and invest in new jobs. What a wonderful program it has been. We tried to get that reauthorized. It was killed here in the Senate by many amendments—amendments that had nothing to do with the underlying bill. So we had to take that bill off the floor after spending I think 6 weeks on the bill and not being able to get that accomplished.

We brought this bill to the floor that would help small businesses innovate, as I say, invent, and invest in new jobs, but the Republicans simply said: No, we are not going to do that. That jobs bill was so important. The electric toothbrush was invented with a small innovation grant, and there are many other examples. That is just one of hundreds. So it is really too bad we haven't been able to do something about that.

The only thing we hear from the House of Representatives, rather than creating jobs, is destroying Medicare as we know it. The American people don't like that, Republicans don't like it, Independents don't like it, Democrats don't like it, young people don't like it, and old people don't like it. It is not a good piece of legislation. Overwhelmingly, it has been just a big zero. But that is what we have from the House of Representatives. That is their main accomplishment this year.

My friend talked about free-trade agreements. I am not a big fan of free-trade agreements. My voting record is