

believe in you. We believe in the future of our country and this is our investment and it should not be cut.

I am sure the Senator from Connecticut hears this in Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I thank the Senator. If the Senator will yield?

Ms. LANDRIEU. Yes.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I agree wholeheartedly with everything the Senator has just said so eloquently about the importance and the partnership of the Pell grants, and I would like to again ask a question to my colleague from Rhode Island, whom I thank, by the way, for organizing this colloquy. His leadership on this issue has been so instrumental, carrying on the great legacy and tradition of Senator Pell.

Isn't it a fact, I ask Senator WHITEHOUSE, that throughout its history, the Pell Grant Program has enjoyed strong bipartisan support; there has been nothing partisan or Republican or Democratic about advancing American higher education in this way?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Yes. That is a great point, I say to the Senator. One of the unfortunate aspects of the current condition we have in Washington, DC, is that a party that has long supported Pell grants—it has long enjoyed bipartisan support—has suddenly, after—what has it been, 30 years of support for the Pell grant—has suddenly walked away from it, has suddenly decided: No, we have a new agenda. Helping people who cannot otherwise afford college to have a chance to go to college, without carrying that trillion-dollar burden of debt and to be able to move up into the college-educated economy and into the opportunities and potential that creates, that is not what we are interested in any longer. We are interested in other things.

Clearly, they are interested in protecting the tax breaks for people making over \$1 million. We tried to get jobs legislation through here. It was paid for with a tiny tax only on the dollars over \$1 million that people earning over \$1 million earn. On the first million dollars, there is no difference. The second million dollars is where it started to kick in. No, no. We stopped jobs legislation over that. But when it comes to a kid who cannot afford college, that is a program they suddenly want to take a whack at. I think it is regrettable because there is a long history of very honorable, sincere, and enthusiastic Republican support for the Pell grant. Frankly, there is nothing Democratic or Republican about an American young person having the chance to begin to climb the ladder of success. That is a common American dream. That is common to both parties. Yet now, in this strange environment we now have to inhabit in Washington, this other party has decided: No, we are walking away from that.

In the House, they tried to knock more than \$1,750 out of the average grant. They would have put nearly 5,800 students in Rhode Island off the Pell

grant. When we hear from people such as Amber, who would not be able to do it but for that—this group I spoke with at URI was so impressive. We had regular students who were right in line. We had the nontraditional students, such as Amber, who had their kids. We had faculty who years ago had gotten their Pell grants and now they are teaching others. They have made a career in academia as a result of that first foothold they got in higher education through the Pell grants. How one would want to cut it at that point by that much, when we have these people—it is just enough to make it possible for them. When we cut it by over \$1,750 for a lot of those kids, for a lot of those working moms, it means: No, we are pulling, as the Senator said, the rug out from under them. They do not get that chance.

We all win when young Americans step forward. Everybody in America wins when young Americans reach their full potential and create industries and do a great job and save lives as surgeons or nurses or EMTs and pay revenues through their taxes through their successes to support our great country.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I would say this program is one of the most effective antiwelfare programs in the country that we fund in Washington. A student from Xavier University wrote in. This student is a first-year student majoring in biology, in premed. This is an African-American Catholic University—the only one in the country and it produces more premed students and more doctors than almost the largest.

Madam President, I know we have just 1 minute. I ask unanimous consent for 1 more minute.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President is the product of a single-family home and was the only individual employed in her household. So as she is going to school, she is also employed, supporting the whole household, basically keeping them off other government programs that might not be as effective.

The Senator's, leadership is to be commended. I thank him for it.

I am going to submit more of these specific stories from specific students and families for the RECORD so people understand this is not politics. This is just trying to do what is smart for our country and to do what is right for these young people who are trying so hard.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that this material be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ADDITIONAL STORIES FROM LOUISIANA STUDENTS

Student A from Xavier University is a sophomore, majoring in chemistry/pre-pharmacy. During the last two years of high

school, she became homeless. She relied on friends and grandparents until she found an apartment during the end of her senior year of high school. Then she worked two jobs to keep a roof over her head. As a student without parental assistance or scholarship funding, she receives \$5,500 per year. She would be unable to remain in college without Pell Grant assistance.

Student B from Xavier University is a first-year student majoring in biology/premed with the goal of becoming a specialized surgeon. She is the product of a single-parent home, and was the only individual employed in her household before enrolling at Xavier. She has paid the balance of her tuition and expenses but still owes Xavier \$3,000. This amount must be paid before she can take her final exams. If she loses her Pell Grant, she would owe an additional \$5,500. She is the first person in her family to attend a four-year college. Receiving the Pell Grant helped make that possible.

Student C from Loyola University at New Orleans is a first-year visual arts student. He had a 3.0 GPA at the midterm of his first semester. He is a work-study student in graphic arts and has to spend a lot of his earned money on art supplies. He receives the full Pell Grant, \$5,550 per year. Without these funds, his mom would not be able to afford to send him to Loyola, or likely to any 4-year university. His mom is his primary next of kin—she is not employed and currently lives in a shelter.

Student D from Loyola University at New Orleans is a sophomore pursuing biochemistry. She is from Mississippi and wants to be a doctor or biomedical engineer. She has a work study job on campus. She receives the full Pell Grant, \$5,550 per year, and could not afford to be there otherwise.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I thank the Senator.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I will yield the floor with appreciation to my colleagues, Senator LANDRIEU, Senator TESTER, and Senator BLUMENTHAL, for coming together to urge our colleagues to support the Pell grant.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, is it time to begin the Republican time?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Yes.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, will you let me know when I have used 4½ minutes?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Yes.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Thank you, Madam President.

BOILER MACT RULE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, last week during the debate on clean air, in which I opposed overturning a rule that allows dirty air from other States to blow into Tennessee, costing us jobs, and hurting our health, I said: Why should we be picking on a good rule when the Environmental Protection Agency is a happy hunting ground of unreasonable regulations.

I just wish to take a moment to talk about perhaps the foremost of those unreasonable regulations, which we call the boiler MACT rule. This is a regulation that will force thousands of industrial boilers around America to

install the maximum available control technology on their boilers. This is important in order to clean the air of such pollutants as mercury.

That is a good idea. What is a bad idea is EPA only gives 3 years for companies to install this technology, a time frame that is completely unrealistic. This is not like a lot of the other clean air laws and rules that have been around for years; this is an unexpected new rule on thousands of industrial boilers which are essential to our manufacturing jobs in America.

First, there is not enough time to comply with the rule, and second, EPA used a flawed methodology in determining what fuels could be used. As a result, little businesses and big businesses all over America are going to be forced to spend hundreds of millions of dollars trying to comply with this rule instead of spending that money on creating jobs.

That is just not one Republican Senator saying this. We have 12 Democratic Senators and a number of Republican Senators who have introduced legislation. Senator COLLINS is the leader of this effort. I am a part of it. So is Senator WYDEN, Senator PRYOR, and Senator LANDRIEU. What we are saying is, let's give the EPA enough time to fix the rule. Fifteen months is what EPA has asked for. Let's give the EPA additional authority to use the correct methodology so they can write a rule that makes some sense and does not act as though it is delivered from Mars or Venus or some other planet, and then let's give the industries enough time to comply with the rules, instead of 3 years, which is what the rule suggests, we will give them 5 years.

Let me try to give some sense of the impact of this unworkable rule. Its estimates that this rule will result in a loss of 340,000 jobs nationwide. We just passed, in a bipartisan way, three trade agreements which the President said would create 250,000 jobs. It took us 3 years to do that. It was something Republicans and Democrats agreed on. We thought that was a big step forward. Yet here we are allowing this agency to go forward with an absolutely unworkable rule that will cost 340,000 jobs. In my State of Tennessee, the cost to businesses is \$530 million.

I have talked to owners of small businesses who are facing a \$1 million cost to try to implement this unworkable rule on their boilers. They have told me they will close their plants. They cannot possibly afford it comply with this rule in this short of a time period.

I have talked to large industries that are affected. Eastman Chemicals is one, they've been in Tennessee forever. It is as an important part of our State as the Great Smoky Mountains are. Thousands of Tennesseans work there. This is what they say: They are going to spend more than \$100 million over and above the work they have already planned in order to bring five Eastman boilers into compliance with the EPA regulations.

This is a company with \$7 billion in revenue. They are going to survive. But some jobs will not. Instead of creating jobs with that money; they will just be trying to comply with an unworkable government regulation. The majority leader said on the floor: Regulations don't cost jobs. Here is a prime example that shows unworkable regulations do cost jobs. And 12 Democratic Senators and at least as many Republican Senators agree on that. We have a bipartisan way to fix this rule. The House, in an overwhelming bipartisan vote, agreed with us by passing similar legislation.

I want to call this Collins-Alexander-Wyden-Pryor-Landrieu legislation to the attention of the public, to the attention of the Senate, and say, there are some regulations that are before us that need to be changed. They are costing jobs. This is not Republican rhetoric or Democratic excuses. It is Republicans and Democrats saying to the EPA: We want to give you the authority to write a good rule. We want you to fix the rule. We want a clean air standard. We do not want to change the end result of the rule, but we want to give you enough time to write the rule. We want you to be able to use the correct method in writing this rule so companies can comply. And we want to give companies enough time to install these technologies so they can make reductions in these harmful pollutants.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has used 4½ minutes.

Mr. ALEXANDER. This is a rare piece of legislation, something we agree on across the aisle, that could immediately save 340,000 jobs, that keeps the clean air rule the EPA has proposed, but simply gives them time to write it properly, the authority to write it properly, and businesses the opportunity to comply with it within a reasonable period of time.

I hope we will adopt it.

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

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded, and Senator COONS and I be allowed to engage in a colloquy for up to 15 minutes.

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

AGREE ACT

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, we are going to start today by talking about job creation in America. I wish to turn it over to Senator COONS to begin this conversation about a very important piece of legislation we filed jointly yesterday.

Mr. COONS. I thank the Senator.

Senator RUBIO and I have come to floor today to talk about our shared

experiences. In my home State of Delaware, over the 1 year I have been a Senator—and over the years before that, I served in county government—I have heard from hundreds, even thousands, of families and individuals looking for work, deeply hurt and challenged by the ongoing slow economic recovery. Folks have come to us asking for opportunities for assistance, for promise and hope.

In reality, I think what is causing some real concern in this country, in my State and most likely in yours, Madam President, and most likely in Senator RUBIO's as well, is a broadly shared concern that we here in the Capitol, we in Congress, are not capable of getting past the partisan politics and making real progress in tackling the job-creating challenges before us.

Let me, if I could, quote from a couple of letters I have received from Delawareans in the last few months. Lawrence from Milford wrote my office: Congress needs to stop the political arguing and take positive action to make America and our economy strong again.

Janet from Wilmington wrote: I am the owner of a very small business. I have been in business 29 years and I have never seen it as tough as it is today.

Joseph in Smyrna summed it all up in a letter he wrote: Our economy needs jobs now.

Delaware is a great place to grow a business, to raise a family, to achieve success. But we have the toughest economy we have seen in generations. The folks we represent expect us to act, and they expect us to find ways to work together and to get past the partisan divide that has made it so difficult for us to make progress.

I ask the Senator what sorts of things has he heard from his constituents in Florida, and how has that motivated the Senator to act?

Mr. RUBIO. Let me point out a couple of things before we begin; that is there are a lot of issues in this process we are not going to agree on. There is an ideological divide about a lot of major issues—the role of government, how do we get the economy growing again, and what government can do about it. The people of America recognize that. They recognize that issues of that magnitude ultimately are solved at the ballot box. You elect people. People run for office on their competing visions of government's role, and you decide those elections. We are going to have one in November of 2012.

But what do we do over the next 12 months? Do we stand around and do nothing and continue to bring up pieces of legislation from both sides of the aisle that we know are going to fail, just to make political points, or do we actually begin to act? There are a lot of reasons why I think we need to act.

I want to share with you an e-mail I received from Stephanie, who lives in Vero Beach. It breaks your heart. I