aren't talking about is the cost of overregulation in America that is doing probably as much damage as all the rest of the problems are doing at this time.

So I only wish to submit for the RECORD that some things are happening today that I think the American people need to look at. I think those statements made, which I will come to the floor and talk about later on, from 10 years ago are now becoming a reality.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, there is no doubt our employment situation in America is not good. Unemployment remains consistently high long after the administration has told us the recession is over. The growth that has been projected year after year has not been at the level the experts had projected. CBO has missed the growth levels. The Federal Reserve has missed the growth levels. We have come in below that consistently. Growth is not where we need it to be; there is no doubt about it. So we have a serious unemployment situation.

Perhaps the most grim concept we need to be well aware of is that workforce participation; that is, the percentage of Americans in the working age group who are actually working is lower today than at any time since the 1970s. That is a stunning statistic. Not since women entered the workforce in large numbers have we seen such low workforce participation numbers.

I believe, first and foremost, that an unemployment extension bill is treating the symptoms of the problem. It is an aspirin for a fever, but the fever has been raging for weeks now. Something is causing it, and we need to deal with the cause of it rather than continuing to treat the symptoms. I think that is so important for us to remember.

Also, this Nation is struggling economically for a number of reasons.

One of them clearly is the size of our debt. Our debt is so large—$17-plus trillion—now that it is causing uncertainty in the economic markets. We have to get our spending under control. We have to do that. Every time we have a desire to do something good, we cannot continue to borrow the money to pay for it.

The unemployment bill that is before us today makes no attempt whatsoever to find spending reductions in other areas of this monstrosity of a government but borrows every penny of it. They say it is $6 billion. Well, it is $6 billion for 90 days—3 months. It is $26 billion over the full year. That is a huge sum of money.

We just had a big dispute over cutting retirement pay that our military people have earned, and it was a dispute over $4 billion. That was over 10 years—$4 billion over 10 years. This is $6 billion over 3 months. So this is a lot of money, and effort should have been made to try to find offsetting reductions in wasteful spending that occur throughout here before we go again to treat a symptom of a disease.

But the tragedy is—the tragedy is—that the policies of this administration are driving this poor growth record. It just is. First and foremost, the proposals have been to tax, tax, tax—tax more. Taxing the private sector will not create growth, no matter whom you tax. It will not be a growth-producing idea to tax the economy. Experts tell us that. The Congressional Budget Office tells us that.

So this is what we have been seeing every year. The budget that passed out of this Senate, the budget that was proposed by the President of the United States—the budget that passed the Senate with I think virtually every single Democratic Senator voting for it and all Republicans opposing it would have increased taxes $1 trillion and increased spending $1 trillion. The taxes were not used to reduce our deficit, as the balanced approach seems to suggest. ''We have a balanced approach to reduce our deficits. We are going to tax some and cut spending some.'' Oh, no, they did not cut spending at all. Their 10-year budget plan called for raising taxes $1 trillion and raising spending $1 trillion. Tax and spend—that is what it was. It was on the floor of the Senate. There is no dispute about that. No one argues about it. But we have agreed to a certain level of spending here to try to bring our economy under control—the Budget Control Act—and we have acknowledged on both sides of the aisle, as have independent experts, that we need to reduce spending and we need to contain the growth of spending and we need to reduce the deficits that are adding to the weakness of our economy and the uncertainty in our economy and creating risks in our economy.

So this bill borrows every penny of it—just a total violation of promised fiscal responsibility. It just is. I wish it were not so. I wish we could just do this and it would not cost anything. But it will cost, and it will hamper growth in our country.

There are other problems. We need more American energy. Energy produced in America creates jobs in America. It creates wealth in America. It keeps us from exporting large amounts—billions and billions of dollars—to Venezuela and the Middle East and other places around the globe. We could be producing that energy here, creating jobs here, keeping that wealth at home, strengthening our economy, and creating growth. That is what we should be doing.

The administration has blocked American energy. They have dragged their feet in every shape, form, and fashion, whether it is moratoriums in the gulf or blocking in Alaska, blocking the pipeline for our neighbors in Canada, or blocking production on public lands. This is not the way to create an economy.

We need a tax system that is not always going up but is more growth-oriented, simpler, more focused on creating growth. We need to eliminate every unnecessary regulation that burdens the American competitive marketplace and makes us less competitive globally instead of adding to them, and we have never seen anything like the plethora of new regulations being issued day after day, week after week, month after month, many of them challengeable constitutionally as being beyond the power of bureaucrats to issue because Congress did not pass the law to justify it. It is driving up the cost of energy, and it is driving up the cost of production in widgets in America, making us less able to compete with foreign competitors.

We need to stand up for American workers and American manufacturing on the world stage. It is time to tell our trading partners: We are willing to trade with you, big boy, but you have to play by the rules. This idea that you can violate the rules and we are still going to treat you as a great trading partner has to be over. We need to stand up for the American worker on the world stage. It has to be done.

Finally, at a time of high unemployment, should we not ask ourselves why the President of the United States and virtually every Democrat and a number of Republicans voted to double the number of workers who were coming to America under this comprehensive immigration bill? We admit a million a year legally. We believe in immigration, we support immigration, but at some point you are bringing in workers to take jobs from unemployed Americans. So now we are here trying to extend unemployment benefits to help unemployed Americans. Is there no common sense in this body? How can this possibly be? But that is the deal.

I know Senator REID and Senator LEAHY were on the floor earlier today, and they said we have to pass this comprehensive immigration bill. It would not end the illegality. It would reduce it only by about 40 percent, according to the Congressional Budget Office, but it would double the number of guest workers coming in. Guest workers, by definition, are people coming to take jobs.

Why are wages down? One reason is—Professor Borjas at Harvard, who has studied this extensively; the Federal Reserve in Atlanta, which has examined this extensively; the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, which has examined it—what do they find? They find that for middle- and lower income workers, their wages are significantly adversely impacted by this unprecedented flow of immigrant labor into America.

I do not have anything against people who want to come to America and work. They are good people. They want to have a job. I understand that. But any nation has to ask itself: What is the right amount? How many people can you absorb without causing millions of Americans to lose their jobs? And we now have to come to the floor of the Senate to ask what we can do to help them in this period of pain they are going through.

So I just want to say a couple things. We can do something now for the unemployed, but we need to be paying for it. We need to be staying within the spending limits we have agreed to. We do not need to pass any more laws that increases the amount of money we borrow. We borrow enough. For heaven's sake, we borrow too much right now, and it threatens our financial future, as expert after expert has told us. They have told us we are running a high risk, and nothing could be worse—nothing could be worse—for working Americans than that we have some other new financial crisis to spring up in the months or years to come because we were irresponsible today. Wouldn't that be a disaster? It certainly would.

So I will urge our colleagues to begin to focus on the underlying disease here; that is, the policies of an administration that has produced the slowest postrecession recovery maybe the Nation has ever had, except for the Great Depression, because it is tax more, regulate more, borrow more. That is all it is, and it will not work systemically to put us on the right path.

I know this is a tough challenge for us, but I am convinced that if this Congress puts its mind to it, there are more than a few places we can find waste, fraud, and abuse to help pay for and to assist those who have been unemployed for a long time. I believe we can absolutely do better than we are today about that, and I hope we will do so. It is not right to just say the only people who care about American workers and care about those who are unemployed are those of us who are willing to forget our budget limitations, to forget our financial responsibilities, and just borrow more and spend more, and somehow this is going to fix the problem we are facing. It will not. It will not fix the problem. In fact, it is creating the very disease that is causing workers to be suffering today.

Madam President, I appreciate the opportunity to share these remarks. I will repeat again, we are seeing very tough times for the American worker. Particularly, the lower income workers are having a difficult time, and there are many causes for that. But just taxing more, spending more, and borrowing more is one of the big causes of the problems we have today, and we are not going to fix that problem by even more of the same policies that got us into the situation we are in today.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask permission to speak for about 10 minutes on the Yellen nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, over the past 5 years the Federal Reserve has pursued unconventional and unprecedented monetary policy. As Vice chair of the Fed, Janet Yellen has been a strong proponent of these policies. As chair, she is likely to continue these same easy-money policies with the same, if not more, vigor as her predecessor.

I have deep concerns about the long-term effects of pursuing these policies. Historical evidence suggests that failing to rein in easy-money policies on a timely basis risks fueling an economic bubble or even hyperinflation.

It is true that one of the lessons learned from the Great Depression was that an overly tight monetary policy in a recession risks economic debilitating deflation. Thus, understandably, when the recession hit in 2008 the Fed sought to avoid the mistakes of the past by lowering interest rates to encourage investment. However, this expansionary monetary policy cannot continue into perpetuity without causing real and lasting damage to our economy.

Just as we should not repeat the mistakes of the Great Depression, we need to be careful not to repeat the mistakes that fueled our recent recession. Let us not forget that our current economic stagnation began with the bursting of the housing bubble in late 2007—a housing bubble fueled by rampant speculation that was driven, in part by historically low interest rates maintained by the Fed between 2001 and 2004.

Yet once again we see the Fed embarking on a policy of sustained historically low interest rates. The Fed has now maintained the Federal funds rate essentially at zero for over 5 years. What may be the future consequences of this policy? What new bubble will arise? At this point, I do not think anyone can answer these questions definitively. But no one can deny that the risks are real and could be devastating.

The Fed, though, has not just sought to maintain record-low interest rates. With its traditional monetary tool tapped out, the Fed has turned to a less conventional and more aggressive program in an attempt to jump-start our economy and lower unemployment.

The Fed is now engaged in an open-ended policy it has termed quantitative easing. Essentially, this is a fancy way to say the Fed is flooding the economy with trillions of dollars through large purchases of mortgage-backed securities and longer-term Treasury securities. As a result of this program, the Fed has seen its balance sheet more than quadruple from around $800 billion to nearly $4 trillion. Vice Chairman Yellen has not presented a plan to Congress on how the Fed plans to deal with this issue.

While I welcome the news from the Fed's December meeting that they intend to reduce the monthly purchases, I fear they may already be in too deep. It remains unclear how the Fed will be able to go about unwinding its nearly $4 trillion balance sheet without spooking investors.

The stock market has become addicted to the Fed's easy-money policies. This has led one notable investment advisor to question whether the Fed will ever be able to end the quantitative easing program.

While the stock market has become addicted to easy money, the benefit to Main Street has been questionable at best. Unemployment remains high, bank lending remains tight, and savers discouraged.

While the benefits to Main Street remain unnoticeable, they most certainly will feel the pain should the Fed carry on their easy-money policy for too long.

For an example of what Main Street could be in store for one need look no further than the late 1970s and early 1980s. The easy-money policies of the 1970s intended to spur employment resulted in stagflation, a period of hyperinflation and high unemployment. During this period unemployment topped 10 percent while inflation exceeded 14 percent.

The experience of the late 1970s and early 1980s made it clear that once you let the inflation genie out of the bottle it is very difficult to stamp it out. After suffering years of stagflation, Americans were then subject to the pain of unprecedented interest rates as high as 20 percent just to get hyperinflation back under control.

Statements by Ms. Yellen indicate she would be open to inflation exceeding the Fed target of 2 percent as a means to achieve full employment. While achieving full employment may be a noble goal, the Fed has a dismal record at being able to produce sustainable job creation through expansionary monetary policy.

While inflation may aid employment in the very short term, our experience with stagflation in the 1970's shows this tradeoff falls apart quickly as people's expectations change. Sustainable job growth comes not from inflation, but price stability that promotes long-run economic growth. We need a chairman focused on a strong dollar and low inflation.

My concerns about the Fed's easy-money policies and inflation led me to vote against Chairman Bernanke for his second term at the Fed. Because it appears that Ms. Yellen will continue to pursue these misguided policies, I cannot in good conscience vote in favor of her confirmation.

Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, Dr. Yellen's nomination is an opportunity to review the unprecedented actions of the Federal Reserve over the last several years.

Five years ago, the Fed began using unconventional monetary policy tools, aggressively pursuing quantitative easing and holding interest rates near or at zero percent.

The Fed now has a balance sheet of $4 trillion, a level roughly equal to one-quarter of annual U.S. economic output.

The Fed has accumulated this balance sheet by buying Treasuries and mortgage-backed securities at a pace of up to $85 billion each month.

I have been a long-time critic of the Fed's quantitative easing purchases.

Several noted economists have called into question the benefits of these purchases, suggesting they may be outweighed by risks.

These policies, specifically purchasing billions in long-term bonds, can distort pricing in markets and lead to excessive risk taking, creating ''bubble-like'' conditions according to experts like Larry Fink at BlackRock.

Bill Gross of PIMCO stated that ''all asset prices, whether it be bonds, stocks, or alternative assets are basically mispriced, artificially elevated'' as a result of the Fed's actions.

I am concerned that the markets have become exceedingly reliant on quantitative easing, circumventing pure economic fundamentals in favor of government-stimulated economy.

Although a reduction in the pace of asset purchases will finally begin this month, in her nomination hearing Dr. Yellen would not commit to a firm deadline for cutting off purchases.

Even after the Fed stops adding to its balance sheet, the question of unwinding the balance sheet remains.

Chairman Bernanke and others have suggested that the Fed might maintain the size of the balance sheet for some time, rather than reducing it to a normal level.

This would mean that the money created to purchase those assets would remain in place.

The President of the Richmond Federal Reserve Bank has called this ''tinder on the books of the banking system.''

He describes a process where banks begin to rapidly lend out those reserves, creating an increase in deposit growth that would put inflationary pressure on the economy.

All of this unconventional monetary policy has failed to produce the benefits that were promised.

A noted economist recently observed that over the last 4 years, the share of adults who are working has not increased and ''GDP has fallen further behind potential as we would have defined it in the fall of 2009.''

All that is to say that despite unprecedented amounts of monetary intervention, the economy has barely responded.

I voted against a second term for Chairman Bernanke due to my concerns with the Fed's unconventional monetary policy.

I voted against Dr. Yellen in 2010 for the position of Vice Chair for similar reasons.

Since joining the Board as Vice Chair, Dr. Yellen continues to promote the policies that led me to vote against her initially.

My position remains unchanged, and I will not vote in support of her nomination.

In addition to unprecedented monetary policy, the next Fed Chair will finalize several key financial regulatory reform rules.

These rules must balance the financial stability with the inherent need for markets to take on and accurately price risk.

They must be done without putting the U.S. markets at an undue competitive disadvantage or harming consumers with unintended consequences.

The Chair of the Federal Reserve must understand how different rules interact with each other, what impact they have on the affected entities and the economy at large.

For example, a number of community banks were surprised by certain provisions in the recently adopted Volcker rule pertaining to their ownership of certain securitized products, including trust-preferred securities.

Notwithstanding assurances by regulators that the final Volcker rule would not disrupt their business model, community banks may now potentially have to divest hundreds of millions of dollars in assets to comply with the rule.

I am concerned that the rush to finalize the Volcker rule before year's end—for purely political reasons—was a cause of this carelessness by regulators with respect to community banks.

It remains to be seen what other unintended consequences will result from the Volcker rule's adoption.

Just as some worried that we did not have enough regulations on the books to prevent the economic crisis, some of us worry that the post-crisis response will result in a regulatory regime that stifles growth and job creation.

The Chair of the Federal Reserve must understand the need for that balance and how to carefully manage competing demands without harming the economy.

I appreciate Dr. Yellen's comments about the need to monitor the risks to financial stability that current monetary policy creates.

I also share her stated concerns about the need to avoid ''one-size-fits-all'' regulations on different kinds of financial institutions, especially ensuring that community banks are subject to ''less onerous'' supervision and regulation.

However, given my concerns about the Fed's monetary policy and Dr. Yellen's support of quantitative easing and excessively low interest rates, I will not vote in favor of her nomination.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, for those who do not remember or those who do not choose to remember, 5 years ago our economy was at the brink of collapse after being rocked by a financial crisis because of incompetence, Wall Street greed, overreach in the financial sector, and more. Washington had let the financial system run wild through deregulation. Banks had overloaded on toxic mortgage securities that they used massive amounts of leverage to purchase. In many cases these Wall Street banks were so large, so complex, so opaque, so overleveraged, they were too big to fail.

Increasingly, these banks are too big to manage and too big to regulate. I remember that time well. I was in Zanesville, OH, when I first got a call to discuss what we needed to do from Chairman Bernanke and President Bush's Secretary of the Treasury Paulson. Five years since the collapse of the markets, 3 years after the passage of the Wall Street reform law, we still cannot say that the Dodd-Frank legislation ended this problem.

In July of last year, Chairman Bernanke said:

> I wouldn't be saying the truth if I said that the problem is gone. It is not gone.

That is the Chairman of the Federal Reserve.

At her nomination hearing before the Senate Banking Committee, Governor Yellen, then the Vice Chair—still the Vice Chair of the Federal Reserve—said that ending ''too Big to Fail'' is ''among the most important goals of the post-crisis period.''

That is one of the many reasons I rise today to support and argue for Janet Yellen's confirmation as the Chair of the Federal Reserve. In today's complex financial system, it is more important than ever that we have strong regulators such as Governor Yellen who can recognize emerging threats to economic stability and who are not afraid to act when they find abuses that put American consumers and workers at risk.

Throughout her distinguished career at the Fed of more than a decade, Governor Yellen has shown she understands how risky financial practices deep inside the largest Wall Street banks can have a terrible and terrifying impact on American families. She was, 8 or 9 years ago, among the first to recognize the housing bubble that wiped out trillions in wealth and led to the biggest recession since the Great Depression.

In the years since the crash, Governor Yellen has been a voice on the need for strong, sensible regulation to protect American workers and small businesses instead of the too-big-to-fail banks. While there are many failures that led the economy to the brink of collapse, one of the biggest mistakes on the Federal level was not keeping the average American's financial interest in mind. There is far too much bias in this institution toward Wall Street instead of Main Street.

Most people in my home State of Ohio, in the Presiding Officer's home State of Hawaii, are not millionaires. They are automakers in Lordstown, steelworkers in Cleveland, they are farmers in Darke County, they are hairdressers in Toledo, they are police officers in Columbus. They are the people who make the products we depend on every day.

My State produces more than any but two States in the United States. They are the people who make these products, who teach our children, who protect our communities. They are the average hard-working Americans trying to create a better life for their children. And they, along with millions of other Americans, deserve better than the crisis that we allowed to happen.

Over the years, Washington, the Fed in particular, has too often lacked an important connection to Americans whose lives are so affected by the decisions it makes. Few have been able to keep a perspective where they understand what is happening in middle America, among working-class Americans, among middle-class Americans.

When President Lincoln was in office, he would go out and meet regularly with ordinary Americans either in the White House or outside the White House. While his staff implored him to stay in the White House and win the war and free the slaves and save the Union, President Lincoln said: I need to go out and get my public opinion bath.

We have also seen the new pope, Francis I, exhort his parish priests to ''smell like the flock''—to get among them, to understand their lives as much as possible, to drink the water they drink, to be among them, to learn from them and to listen to them. We must know those whom we serve.

In a speech last year before the AFL–CIO, Janet Yellen described the real-world implications of unemployment and noted that the unemployed are not just statistics. She took stock of the work ahead for the Fed, notably ensuring that Dodd-Frank is fully implemented in ending ''too big to fail.'' I think she will break out of the beltway bubble. I think she will get out in the country far more than any of her predecessors have done and consider the lives and work to understand the lives of those people affected by these Federal Central Bank decisions.

As Chair of the Fed Subcommittee on Communications, she has played a strong role in monetary policy and its efforts to put people back to work, despite Congress's unwillingness—this body's unwillingness—to help. Whether it is extending unemployment benefits, which we should be doing today, whether it is raising the minimum wage, it means engaging in the lives and helping people in this country who may not be as privileged as those of us who have the opportunity to serve in the Senate.

Janet Yellen is qualified to take the helm of the Fed and make history in becoming the first woman to run the Central Bank.

In confirming Ms. Yellen, we can look forward to a new era of recovery and growth. I look forward to working with Janet Yellen and her staff.

I urge my colleagues to confirm Janet Yellen to be Chair of the Federal Reserve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Janet L. Yellen, of California, to be Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System?

Mr. COBURN. I ask for the ayes and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) would each vote ''yea.''

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) would have voted ''yea.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DONNELLY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 56, nays 26, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 1 Ex.]

YEAS—56

Alexander	Donnelly	Mikulski
Ayotte	Feinstein	Murkowski
Baucus	Flake	Murphy
Bennet	Franken	Murray
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Nelson
Booker	Hagan	Pryor
Boxer	Heinrich	Reed
Brown	Hirono	Reid
Burr	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Cantwell	Kaine	Schatz
Cardin	Kirk	Schumer
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Landrieu	Tester
Chambliss	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Coats	Levin	Udall (NM)
Coburn	Manchin	Warner
Collins	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Coons	Menendez	Wyden
Corker	Merkley	

NAYS—26

Barrasso	Grassley	Roberts
Blunt	Heller	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Scott
Cochran	Inhofe	Sessions
Cornyn	Isakson	Shelby
Crapo	Johanns	Toomey
Cruz	Johnson (WI)	Vitter
Enzi	Lee	Wicker
Fischer	Risch	

NOT VOTING—18

Baldwin	Heitkamp	Paul
Begich	King	Portman
Durbin	Markey	Sanders
Graham	McCain	Shaheen
Harkin	McConnell	Thune
Hatch	Moran	Warren

The nomination was confirmed.

• Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, extreme weather throughout the Midwest created travel delays that prevented me from being in Washington today for the vote to confirm Janet Yellen as Chairwoman of the Federal Reserve. She is an excellent candidate, given her long history of service at the Fed and her vast amount of expertise, and had I been here, I would have cast an aye vote in support of her nomination, just as I did on the vote to invoke cloture on her nomination.

Dr. Yellen most currently serves as vice chair of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve. Over the span of the last nearly four decades, she has served as a member of the Board of Governors, the chair of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors, and as the president and CEO of the 12th District Federal Reserve Bank in San Francisco. She's also spent a good part of her career in the academic world, currently as a professor at Berkeley's Haas School of Business.

The worst financial crisis since the Great Depression sent our economy into a hole that it is still climbing out of today. The good news is that it is emerging from that dark place, thanks in part to the role of the Federal Reserve, led by current Chairman Ben Bernanke. Since the depths of the crisis, the Fed has taken on a more creative role in restoring our economy and stabilizing our financial system, using unconventional tools and setting specific goals for growth.

What makes Dr. Yellen a particularly strong nominee is the attention she has paid to connecting the labor market to monetary policy. Much of her career has been devoted to these subjects. In October 2009, our unemployment rate reached 10 percent. Today, with the help of the Fed's actions, it stands at 7 percent. In my home State of Illinois, unemployment stood at 10.7 percent in 2009, and is down to 8.7 percent today. Though this is far from good enough, it shows real progress.

Our next Fed chair should be able to take on the challenges our economy still faces—lowering the unemployment rate even further and meeting inflationary goals. The focus that Dr. Yellen brings to the labor market gives me confidence that she can help our Nation reach new highs when it comes to creating jobs and getting Americans back to work.

The Wall Street Journal recently prepared an interesting analysis examining more than 700 predictions made by 14 Fed policymakers. That analysis found Dr. Yellen to be the most accurate of the 14. That did not surprise me. Dr. Yellen could not be more deserving of this nomination given her experience and precise economic judgment. She has the know-how to make the decisions that a Fed chair needs to make about how to move our economy further forward successfully and transparently.

I support Dr. Yellen's nomination and look forward to working with her as she becomes our Nation's first Chairwoman of the Federal Reserve.●

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the next vote be 10 minutes in duration, the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived, and there be 2 minutes equally divided prior to the vote on the motion to proceed to S. 1845.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

There will be 2 minutes equally divided prior to the cloture vote.

The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, on December 28, 1.3 million Americans lost their extended unemployment benefits. They are the first wave of what will be more than 3 million other Americans. These people have worked, they have qualified for unemployment insurance, they need help, and we have to help them. If we don't do that, not only will these families suffer, the economy will suffer. The CBO estimated we will lose 200,000 jobs if we don't extend unemployment benefits, and 0.2 percent of growth.

If we want to help working families—people who qualify because they worked and have to continue to look for work to be qualified—and our economy, then vote to at least let us go forward. Give us 3 months to work on issues, funding, and anything else, but don't throw these people off a cliff and leave them without anything.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this is a serious issue, but if this was anything other than a political exercise, the majority leader would have rescheduled this vote when we did not have 17 Members of the Senate unable to be here and vote on this.

I have no doubt as to what the outcome will be on this cloture vote, but I believe it is purely a scheduling matter. It ought to be postponed to a later time when we can have a real debate so we can look for a way to pay for this extension of unemployment benefits and how to get the economy growing again so people can find jobs. That is what people want; they want to work. They don't want unemployment compensation; they want jobs so they can provide for their families.

Unfortunately, because of the timing of this vote, we know what the outcome is, and it is transparent that this is a political exercise and not a real effort to try to fix the problem.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the vote be scheduled tomorrow at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE EXPLANATIONS

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Unfortunately, I was not here to vote for Janet Yellen, the head of the Federal Reserve. Had I been here to vote, I would have voted to support her in that position.

My flight was delayed, and so I did not get back in time for the vote. I want to make sure that the RECORD shows that I support her as the new chairman of the Fed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I was on the same flight with Senator SHAHEEN. I was looking forward to having the opportunity to vote for Janet Yellen to be Chair of the Federal Reserve. I am very disappointed I didn't get to formally vote for her, but I want to make sure that the RECORD reflects my strong support.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

YELLEN NOMINATION

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to secrecy, in opposition to the veil of secrecy that cloaks the money changing hands that takes place in the temple of the Federal Reserve. While the money changes hands, the monied class gets richer and the middle class gets shortchanged.

It is more than time to part the curtain that hides the trillions of dollars that changes hands. There is a revolving door from Wall Street to the Treasury to the Fed and back again. We have former Secretaries of the Treasury who go from government to Wall Street pocketing hundreds of millions of dollars.

I have called repeatedly for transparency at the Federal Reserve so Americans can see what is being done with their money supply. Every time I call for transparency, people from both sides have said transparency would undermine Fed independence. The problem is that Congress created the Fed and Congress was intended to have oversight over the Fed, and as time has gone on we have lost that oversight, so independence has really led to abuse.

Some say: Well, the Fed is audited each year.

The investigator general who is responsible for auditing the Fed came to Congress in 2009, and here is what she had to say during a question-and-answer session in a House committee. A Congressman asked:

> What have you done to investigate the off-balance sheet transactions conducted by the Federal Reserve which, according to Bloomberg, now total $9 trillion in 8 months?

She fumbled, she repeated herself, she looked silly, and then she said:

> You know, I think it may be important at this point to—

Yadda, yadda, yadda, and then several yaddas later, this bombshell from the auditor:

> We do not have jurisdiction to directly go out and audit Reserve Bank activities specifically. So, really, there is no audit of the Federal Reserve, so don't let anybody say that we have an audit. No meaningful audit