

ObamaCare's 30-hour workweek rule which is cutting paychecks to the middle class. In other words, this is an amendment that seeks to take the causes of joblessness head on rather than simply treating the symptoms of a down economy. It is an amendment that aims to help Americans find jobs with a steady paycheck and the promise of a better life.

There are other amendments not contained within this package the Senate should be voting on too. For instance, the national right-to-work amendment Senator PAUL and I have just introduced—transformational legislation that would empower American workers and put our country on a path to greater prosperity.

But the larger point is this: The Senate needs to be allowed to function again. While Members file amendments on behalf of their constituents, those amendments should get due consideration. That is particularly true when those amendments have bipartisan support and aim to address our still-ailing economy and the families struggling in it. My hope is our Democratic colleagues will allow this to happen.

These are serious times and we cannot afford to waste months on purely partisan proposals that have no hope of passing. We need to work together to advance serious proposals that expand jobs and opportunity.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS MATTHEW S. SLUSS-TILLER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to a Kentucky Special Operations Forces soldier who was lost in service to his country, the life of SFC Matthew S. Sluss-Tiller of Catlettsburg, KY, which prematurely ended on February 3, 2010, in Pakistan, where he was serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He was killed when the enemy attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device. He was 35 years old.

For his service in uniform, Sergeant First Class Sluss-Tiller received many awards, medals, and decorations, including the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, two Meritorious Service Medals, five Army Commendation Medals, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, five Army Achievement Medals, five Army Good Conduct Medals, the National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Service Star, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Kosovo Campaign Medal with Bronze Star, two Afghanistan Campaign Medals with Bronze Service Stars, the Iraq Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal, three noncommissioned officers professional development ribbons, the Army service ribbon, two overseas service ribbons, the NATO Medal, the combat action badge, and the senior parachutist badge; obviously a much decorated soldier.

Pictured behind me is Sergeant First Class Sluss-Tiller with his daughter Hannah, who was only 3 years old when he died. Matthew's wife Melissa proudly sent this picture to my office so it can be honored on the Senate floor. It was taken the summer before Matthew was killed, and it was his last picture with his daughter.

Melissa remembers the bond between Matthew and Hannah fondly. "He used to sing to me and Hannah," she says.

He would dance with her standing on his feet, singing loudly. Thinking of it makes me smile. He loved being a husband and a father, and he was great at both.

Born and raised in eastern Kentucky, Matthew graduated from Lawrence County High School in 1993. Brenda Thornbury, his former art teacher, remained friends with Matthew after he graduated and recalls he knew from a young age what he wanted to do. "Matthew was a wonderful person," she says.

He was always eager to do whatever he needed to do to serve his country . . . he knew he would serve his country. He loved the Lord, and he loved his family.

Matthew's father Edward Tiller agrees. "From the time I bought him his first GI Joe, he wanted to be an Army man," he said.

In short, it seems clear that for Matthew, the Army was not just a job, it was a way of life. He was dedicated to justice and service in the name of our country.

In 1991, Matthew enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves as a heavy construction mechanic and served at the 261st Ordnance Company located at Cross Lanes, WV. In 1993, he left the family farm and enlisted in the Active-Duty Army as a signal specialist. He served at Fort Bragg, NC, as well as in Germany and in Kuwait.

SFC Jamie Mullinax, a friend of Matthew's who trained with him at Fort Bragg, knew well the look of happiness we can see in Matthew's face behind me. He says:

If you knew Matt, you knew that smile. He always strived to do the best at what he did. I know he believed in what he was doing and loved wearing the military uniform and believed in what it stood for.

As the list of awards, medals, and decorations I read earlier makes clear, Matthew excelled at being a soldier. In his many years of training, he successfully completed the U.S. Army Airborne course, the Jumpmaster course, the Master Jumpmaster course, the Air Movement Operations course, the Military Transition Team course, the Civil Affairs Qualification course, and the Advanced and Basic Noncommissioned Officer's courses.

Prior to his time of deployment, Matthew deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Joint Guardian in Kosovo. In his final deployment Matthew was assigned to the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion, 95th Civil Affairs Brigade, based out of Fort Bragg.

In his free time Matthew loved golf, hunting, hiking, camping, and riding

motorcycles, and he was a passionate fan of UK basketball.

The many people who came to pay their respects at Matthew's funeral in eastern Kentucky witnessed the recognition of Matthew's sacrifice when they saw a three-star general come to their small town to lead the honor guard.

LTG John Mulholland delivered these remarks at the service:

Matthew was part of America's Army Special Operations Forces and as such was one of the finest soldiers in the world.

He went on:

That's no exaggeration, that he was embarked on a very important if not critical mission that is directly tied to the security of this country.

Of course, as impressive as his service record was, I think the picture behind me makes clear that the most important job to Matthew was husband and father. I know his family misses him terribly.

Melissa says the following about her husband:

I believe that our souls are beacons glowing immensely with light so powerful and beautiful that only in heaven can we become a true vision of ourselves. I know my Matthew is standing tall in heaven, his light so stunning a reflection of who he was. God needed him, and I cannot question that.

We are thinking of Matthew's loved ones today, including his wife Melissa, his daughter Hannah, his parents Edward Tiller and Jane Blankenship, his stepparents Von Tiller and Forest Blankenship, his siblings Selena Dawn Pack Blankenship, Michael Blankenship, and Annette Sorg, and many other beloved family members and friends.

Our country has lost a faithful and devoted hero with the passing of SFC Matthew S. Sluss-Tiller. I know my colleagues join me in expressing great condolences to his family for their loss, and great gratitude to them for lending our country such an honorable and noble patriot.

I hope Hannah and all of Matthew's loved ones know that America will always—always—be grateful for his sacrifice.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3979, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3979) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Pending:

Reid (for Reed) amendment No. 2874, of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 2875 (to amendment No. 2874), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 2877 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 2874), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 2878 (to amendment No. 2877), of a perfecting nature.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. 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. BOOKER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on behalf of the 2.3 million Americans, including the 140,000 New Jerseyans who have been without a job for months and desperately need our help. These Americans are Americans who are veterans who stood for us in the military and Armed Forces. These are families and individuals with children. These are our seniors. These are folks who have been working for decades and suddenly found themselves in the worst economy of my lifetime without a job.

I am very proud of this body. We are inching closer toward passing legislation to restore Federal unemployment insurance. What this money does is it takes families from crisis with these meager checks to give a little bit of stability so they can do what is necessary to look for work.

It helps them keep their car insurance so they can ride to interviews. It helps them keep the cable service going so they can apply online and actually file their résumés as they look for jobs. It helps them meet mortgage payments, so they can keep a roof over their heads or rental payments as well.

I want to thank the incredible bipartisan leadership of DEAN HELLER and JACK REED. Senator HELLER and Senator REED have been working hard together with a group of us relentlessly to bring us this far. I have been so grateful for the leadership of those two Senators and others because it made us so close in this body to getting unemployment insurance extended.

This is a bipartisan bill. It involves compromise. It is what the American people want us to do, Republicans and Democrats coming together for millions of Americans that are in crisis right now through no fault of their own, in an economy where there are three people looking for a job for every single job that is available.

I want to express my gratitude to the entire bipartisan group cosponsoring the bill. My colleagues, Senator REED, Senator HELLER, Senator MERKLEY, Senator SHERROD BROWN, Senator DURBIN, Senator SUSAN COLLINS, Senator ROB PORTMAN, Senator LISA MURKOWSKI, and Senator MARK KIRK, Re-

publicans and Democrats alike who hammered out a compromise, have done the difficult work and are pushing to move this forward.

I also want to thank people from New Jersey who have shared their stories with me, who have been active and engaging from online posts, letters, and phone calls—all of them fighting to find work. I have heard from Republican New Jerseyans and Democratic New Jerseyans. I have heard from military veterans and single moms. I have heard from folks who are so hungry to work. But while they are looking, they are looking to this body, to all of Congress to help them meet the basic minimum needs so that they can continue to have some stability and not be swallowed up by the quicksand of economic crisis and to be able to continue to find a job.

They are living examples. Each and every one of those millions of Americans are examples of what is at stake if we do not act. I have heard painful stories of people facing real crises, from homelessness to skipping medications, doing everything they can to keep some semblance of stability so that they can find a job. Unfortunately, many are falling through the cracks. Many are facing the darkest of days.

As the Senate prepares to vote on this incredibly vitally important bill, I want to stress that this legislative body is only as effective as both Chambers and parties being able to come together, to really follow in that great American tradition that for the last 50 years, Democrats and Republicans during times of economic crisis, have come together and found a way to hammer out compromises to extend unemployment insurance under Reagan, under Bush, under Clinton, and under Carter. We found a way to get forward, both Chambers being there for Americans in the economic crisis.

Today is a significant step in our fight to restore hope to America's unemployed but only if this bill is also voted on and passed in the House of Representatives.

I have sat in living rooms, diners, and soup kitchens all across the State of New Jersey, and I can tell you the crisis is real. I am hopeful that if my colleagues in the House of Representatives listen to the voices—Republicans and Democrats, red and blue, North and South, all across this country—of their unemployed constituents, they will do what is right. They will shun that intellectually unreal idea that Americans are lazy, that they don't want to work. We have millions of Americans out there fighting for their hope of finding a job, and they need the help of the House of Representatives, as I believe they will get it from the Senate this week.

No matter our party, all of us have folks in our home States who are unemployed and suffering because we have thus far failed to do what every other Congress has done in the past when long-term unemployment rates

have been so high, as they are today. We must extend Federal unemployment insurance. America needs our House of Representatives to listen to the pleas of those who are barely making ends meet.

I remember Joan and her daughter, a recent Rutgers University graduate. They live together and were both cut off from unemployment insurance the same week in December. The modest unemployment checks that Joan and her daughter were receiving had helped them to keep up with mortgage payments. While they waited for us to vote, their home was placed into foreclosure.

Then there is Lauren from Clifton, who wrote my office saying she had sent out close to 1,000 resumes without luck and had reached the point where she couldn't pay to keep the heat on in her house during this brutal winter and she feared her phone was going to have to be cut off next. She wrote:

I've been looking for work tirelessly. What does someone in my situation do?

These folks have worked hard all of their lives. They have played by the rules but unfortunately happen to be in a bad economy not of their making, which they did not contribute to, and are caught in these difficult times. They are doing everything right and so should their representatives in Congress.

Today we are casting a vote for them. Today I am proud to say that in the Senate we are coming together, Democrats and Republicans, hammering out a compromise, meeting each other in the middle, and doing what is expected of us by Americans—reaching out, lending a hand, in a time of crisis. I implore my colleagues in the House of Representatives to do the same.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise to speak to my amendment No. 2959 to the unemployment insurance legislation that is before us. The amendment is called the Good Jobs, Good Wages, and Good Hours Act.

Twelve times Congress has voted to extend emergency unemployment benefits since 2008, and what do we have to show for those 12 extensions of these benefits. More than 10 million Americans remain unemployed. Of those, more than 3.8 million Americans have been unemployed for longer than 6 months. Millions more remain underemployed or have simply dropped out of the workforce altogether, too discouraged to even look for work in this stagnant economy.

Over that same period a Democrat-led Senate and the Obama White House have done little but grow the size of the government and shrink the size of the middle class.

In 2009, Congress passed a \$1 trillion stimulus bill that poured taxpayer dollars into projects such as Solyndra and a battery manufacturer that is now owned by the Chinese. It failed to create the jobs and economic growth that was promised by the White House, but it succeeded in creating 5 straight years of record deficits.

In 2010 Congress enacted ObamaCare—essentially a government takeover of one-sixth of our economy with 2,700 pages of new laws and 25,000 pages of new regulations. It didn't fulfill the President's promise of lowering health care costs or letting families keep their doctors, but it has succeeded in canceling health plans and raising taxes.

In 2010 Congress enacted Dodd-Frank. It hasn't fixed too big to fail, but in one respect it has succeeded in creating jobs. It is estimated that more than 30,000 employees will be required to file the paperwork associated with the \$18 billion in Dodd-Frank compliance costs for our financial sector.

Meanwhile, Congress has failed to put a check on the EPA, which continues pushing regulations that have record-setting price tags. These regulations aren't creating jobs, but they are fulfilling the President's promise to make energy prices skyrocket.

Five years into the Obama administration and the scorecard doesn't look very good, with \$456 billion in new regulations, \$1.7 trillion in new taxes, 10.4 million people unemployed, and economic growth far behind the pace of other post-World War II recoveries.

So here we are debating the 13th extension of emergency unemployment benefits in the past 5 years because we have 3.8 million people in this country, workers who have been out of work for more than 6 months. If enacted, these benefits would last until June. Then what? Are we going to have a 14th extension, perhaps a 15th extension? Without job creating policies, this 13th extension is just another bandaids that doesn't address the true causes of chronic joblessness that plague the Obama economy.

My Republican colleagues and I came to the floor yet again this week to debate and to vote on amendment ideas that will change the course the Obama administration has put the country on. We have offered dozens of amendments that will stimulate private-sector investment, create jobs, and make energy and health care more affordable. I have worked with many of my colleagues on a package of job-creating ideas that we would like to add to this 13th extension of emergency unemployment insurance benefits. My amendment, as I said, is called the Good Jobs, Good Wages, Good Hours Act, and it includes many of these ideas.

I would like to share a few of them with my colleagues in the Senate so

people understand that when we come to the floor to talk about offering amendments and getting votes on amendments, we are serious. We have real substantive ideas that we believe will address the fundamental issue—the underlying cause of chronic high unemployment—by getting people back to work through job creation, through an expanding and growing economy.

My amendment includes a provision that has been pushed by Senator HOEVEN that would finally approve the Keystone XL Pipeline. After 5 years of delay, it is time to approve the pipeline and the 40,000 jobs it will support. Senator HOEVEN has been the leading advocate of that here in the Senate.

The amendment I am offering includes Leader MCCONNELL's legislation to stop EPA's war on affordable energy. Leader MCCONNELL's bill puts consumers ahead of liberal and environmental groups by stopping costly regulations that will make it even more difficult for the middle class to make ends meet.

My amendment includes a provision pushed by Senators BARRASSO and HOEVEN to approve more LNG exports to our NATO allies and to the Ukraine, something that is especially timely in light of what is going on in that part of the world. Now is the ideal time to create more domestic jobs while breaking our allies' dependence on Russian energy supplies.

My amendment also addresses the problems created by ObamaCare. It includes a provision pushed by Senator COLLINS that will restore the 40-hour workweek. It will finally repeal the job-destroying medical device tax, which Senators TOOMEY and HATCH have been tirelessly fighting, which has cost us, by some estimates, 30,000 jobs already in our economy because of this new job-killing tax.

My amendment ensures that veterans and the long-term unemployed are not punished by the costs of the ObamaCare employer mandate. It includes a provision Senator BLUNT has authored that raised this issue in the Senate on behalf of veterans, and in the House a similar bill passed by a vote of 406 to 1. Certainly we can find few Democrats who are willing to provide ObamaCare relief to veterans and the long-term unemployed.

My amendment also provides permanent targeted tax relief to millions of small businesses. Small businesses create 65 percent of all new jobs. Yet this administration has done little more than punish them with more regulations and higher taxes. This amendment makes permanent higher expensing levels, provides capital gains tax relief for investing in small businesses, and expands options to increase cashflow at Main Street businesses across the country. It allows small businesses to deduct more startup costs, and puts the selfemployed on an equal playing field when paying for health care costs.

This amendment also includes commonsense regulatory reform put for-

ward by Senator PORTMAN that will ensure taxpayers know the true cost of new regulations. It requires agencies to conduct a cost-benefit analysis and provide advanced notice of any major new regulations.

Finally, this amendment includes the House-passed SKILLS Act, which Senator SCOTT has introduced as an amendment to the UI bill. Currently, we have 50 Federal worker training programs spread across nine Federal agencies. Many of them are duplicative and few of them have been evaluated for whether or not they are effective. This amendment would combine 35 of those programs into one Workforce Investment Fund that will empower governors to tailor programs to their States and benefit employers and employees alike.

My point simply is that Senate Republicans stand ready to offer more than just the status quo. We understand the long-term unemployed want more than just 20 more weeks of unemployment benefits. They want a job. We understand those who are struggling to adapt in a changing economy want more than a morass of broken worker training programs. They want relevant training that prepares them for the jobs that are in demand today. We understand that low-income families want more than government programs designed to help them just get by. They want more opportunity and a better future for their children. We understand that Main Street businesses across the country cannot afford endless regulations coming from Washington, DC. They want a chance to succeed and to fulfill their American dream.

I am hopeful that at least some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle understand that basic principle too and will join us in including job-creating measures as part of this 13th extension of emergency unemployment benefits. We can do better for the American people. We should do better by the American people.

We have serious proposals, serious job-creating proposals that don't get a chance to see the light of day because the majority party in the Senate blocks amendments from being offered, blocks amendments from being debated, and blocks amendments from being voted on.

So what do we have. We have the status quo. That means that for the 13th time we have to extend unemployment insurance benefits to people who have been unemployed for way too long because we have failed to put policies in place that are actually good for job creation, that are actually the right types of incentives for our small businesses to hire, that take away the burdensome cost of taxes and regulations that make it more expensive and more difficult for our small businesses to hire, and because we fail to take into consideration the impact that so many of these things we do here in Washington have on hardworking people in this country who are trying to lift

their families into the middle class and to provide a better future for their children and grandchildren.

That is what every American wants. That is what every family in America aspires to. We ought to do something about it. Another meager government check that helps people get by isn't the way to a brighter and better future. The way to a brighter and better future is a good-paying job with an opportunity for advancement. That is what we ought to be focused on, and that is what the provisions I just mentioned, that are included in my amendment, would do.

My amendment incorporates many of the ideas Members on our side have advanced, all with an eye toward creating jobs and growing and expanding the economy in a way that will create those good-paying opportunities and give people a better chance at a better future. So I really hope we will get the chance to vote. We can't, evidently, get individual amendments that have been offered by individual Members voted on, so we have taken a number of ideas and incorporated them into this amendment, an alternative to what is being proposed by the Democrats, which simply treats the symptom of this problem but does nothing to address the underlying cause of the problem.

We want to focus on the problem; we want to focus on the cause; we want to focus on solutions; and we believe the Senate ought to be the place where we have an opportunity to vote on those very solutions. So I encourage my colleagues on both sides to open this process. Let us allow the American people to have their voices heard—not just the voices of a few but the voices of the many people in the Senate who have good ideas about how to create jobs, grow the economy, and build a better future for our children and grandchildren.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and 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. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak to the Senate as if in morning business.

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

CREATING REAL VALUE

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, in Kansas there is a company called Koch Industries that is an important component of our State, its economy, and many, several thousand Kansans work there. Unfortunately, in the political discourse of our country, Koch Industries and its owners are often subject to attacks.

I happened to be reading the Wall Street Journal this morning, and I no-

ticed a column, an opinion piece written by the chairman of the board of Koch Industries, Charles G. Koch, and I wish to share that with my colleagues today.

It seems to me the things that are outlined in Mr. Koch's opinion piece, while not everyone would agree, they are certainly within the wide mainstream of American thought and certainly reflect opinions that are worthy of debate and discussion in our country and on the Senate floor.

We all bring diversity, a different set of values, opinions, beliefs of political philosophy to the debate on the Senate floor, and I wanted to share one of Koch Industries owner's beliefs about those values and his philosophy and how it affects Americans today.

This is an opinion piece from today's Wall Street Journal written by a Kansan, Charles Koch. Mr. Koch says:

I have devoted most of my life to understanding the principles that enable people to improve their lives. It is those principles—the principles of a free society—that have shaped my life, my family, our company and America itself.

Unfortunately, the fundamental concepts of dignity, respect, equality before law and personal freedom are under attack by the nation's own government. That's why, if we want to restore a free society and create greater well-being and opportunity for all Americans, we have no choice but to fight for those principles. I have been doing so for more than 50 years, primarily through educational efforts. It was only in the past decade that I realized the need to also engage in the political process.

Again, Mr. Koch speaking:

More than 200 years ago, Thomas Jefferson warned that this could happen. "The natural progress of things," Jefferson wrote, "is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground." He knew that no government could possibly run citizens' lives for the better. The more government tries to control, the greater the disaster, as shown by the current health-care debacle. Collectivists (those who stand for government control of the means of production and how people live their lives) promise heaven but deliver hell. For them, the promised end justifies the means. A truly free society is based upon a vision of respect for people and what they value. In a truly free society, any business that disrespects its customers will fail, and deserves to do so. The same should be true of any government that disrespects its citizens. The central belief and fatal conceit of the current administration is that you are incapable of running your own life, but those in power are capable of running it for you. This is the essence of big government and collectivism.

Instead of encouraging free and open debate, collectivists strive to discredit and intimidate opponents. They engage in character assassination. . . . This is the approach that Albert Schopenhauer described in the 19th century, that Saul Alinsky famously advocated in the 20th, and that so many despots have infamously practiced. Such tactics are the antithesis of what is required for a free society—and a telltale sign that the collectivists do not have good answers.

Rather than try to understand my vision for a free society or accurately report the facts about Koch Industries, our critics would have you believe we're "un-American" and trying to "rig the system," that we're against "environmental protection" or eager to "end workplace safety standards."

These falsehoods remind Mr. Koch of the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's observation, "Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not to his own facts."

Here are some facts about my philosophy and our company: Koch companies employ 60,000 Americans; who make many thousands of products that Americans want and need. According to government figures, our employees and the 143,000 additional American jobs they support generate \$11.7 billion in compensation and benefits. About one-third of our U.S.-based employees are union members.

Koch employees have earned well over 700 awards for environmental, health and safety excellence since 2009, many of them are from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. EPA officials have commended us for our "commitment to a cleaner environment" and called us "a model for other companies."

Our refineries have consistently ranked among the best in the nation for low per-barrel emissions. In 2012, our Total Case Incident Rate—

That is a safety measure—

was 67% better than a Bureau of Labor Statistics average for peer industries. Even so, we have never rested on our laurels. We believe there is always room for innovation and improvement.

Far from trying to rig the system, I have spent decades opposing cronyism and all political favors, including mandates, subsidies, and protective tariffs—even when we benefit from them. I believe that cronyism is nothing more than welfare for the rich and powerful, and should be abolished. Koch Industries was the only major producer in the ethanol industry to argue for the demise of the ethanol tax credit in 2011. That government handout . . . needlessly drove up food and fuel prices as well as other costs for consumers—many of whom were poor or otherwise disadvantaged.

Mr. Koch says:

Now the mandate needs to go, so that consumers and the marketplace are the ones who decide the future of ethanol.

Instead of fostering a system that enables people to help themselves, America is now saddled with a system that destroys values, raises costs, hinders innovation and relegates millions of citizens to a life of poverty, dependency and hopelessness. This is what happens when elected officials believe that people's lives are better run by politicians and regulators than by the people themselves. Those in power fail to see that more government means less liberty, and liberty is the essence of what it means to be American. Love of liberty is an American ideal. If more businesses (and elected officials) were to embrace a vision of creating real value for people in a principled way, our nation would be far better off—not just today, but for generations to come. I'm dedicated to fighting for that vision. I'm convinced that most Americans believe it's worth fighting for, too.

That is the opinion piece from the Wall Street Journal this morning, written by a Kansan, Charles Koch.

I commend that opinion piece and its thoughts to my colleagues in the Senate.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill 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 (Ms. BALDWIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I come to the floor today to address the unemployment benefits legislation. This legislation is, frankly, an admission that after 5 years of spending more money for costly government stimulus—all of it borrowed—to try to increase employment in America, we still have an unemployment crisis.

Not long ago at the White House, Mr. Sperling said that there are three applicants for every job in America and wages are down. In effect, this legislation is an admission that taxing, spending, regulating, and borrowing has not worked. Indeed, those policies will never work. More regulation, more taxing, more borrowing, and more debt will not improve the economy. We know that. Despite what some so-called experts say, we know that is not a policy that will work, but urgent action is needed.

According to testimony we heard this week in the Budget Committee, if you adjust for the retirement of the baby boomers, the labor force is still short 4.5 million people, the equivalent of \$500 billion in national income lost each year. But the majority has circled their wagons around this spend-and-borrow agenda.

For instance, our friends are blocking a Republican amendment requiring companies to hire legal workers, not unlawful workers. The E-Verify system should be required nationwide. It would simply check the Social Security number of applicants, which would identify many people who have no right to be employed in America because they are not here lawfully. In a time of high unemployment, we ought not to be filling our jobs with people who are not lawful and not lawfully able to work in America, while at the same time financially supporting people who are unemployed in the country. At the same time, congressional Democrats have pushed for a bill that would more than double the future H-1B guest worker visas that are frequently used for offshore jobs.

As ranking member of the Budget Committee, I have to inform my colleagues that this unemployment bill is not honestly paid for, and that it violates the Ryan-Murray budget agreement that was signed into law just over 3 months ago. We said we were not going to spend above a certain amount.

Actually, Ryan-Murray raised the amount the Budget Control Act had limited spending to when we were in a tight fix. I think this year in particular was probably the toughest year under the Budget Control Act, so relief was provided and it raised the spending limits for a fifth year and it helped. Just 3 months ago we reaffirmed those spending limits and said we were not going to go above them.

Yet just this past Monday, the Senate passed the so-called doc fix which

exceeded the Ryan-Murray spending limits by \$6.1 billion this year alone. We adopted a limit, and what do we do? We want to help our doctors, but instead of reducing spending somewhere else in this massive government, we come up with a gimmick argument to say we are paying for it and add, in effect, \$6.1 billion to the expenditures this year. We objected to that, but people voted to waive the budget with an up-or-down vote. Do you want to stick by the agreement we reached 3 months ago or do you want to raise it and spend more? The majority in the Senate voted to spend more, and this is why we have such an extreme debt threat in America today.

The bill that is before us now is the unemployment insurance legislation, which exceeds the 2014 limit on spending by another \$9.9 billion. Our Federal budget is \$3.5 trillion—\$3,500 billion—and we can't find some other reductions if we want to fund a new expenditure, such as unemployment compensation? We can't find someplace that we can tighten our belts and pay for it?

My colleagues say that while spending increases this year, the bill is paid for over the next decade. They promised that although we will spend more this year, a decade later—10 years—we are going to get around to paying for it. There are three major problems with this contention, and we just have to address them so there is no mistake about it. This is not legitimate, and it threatens the financial integrity of the country.

The Ryan-Murray budget deal established spending limits. You cannot get out of those spending limits by raising fees and taxes. Taxing more to spend more was not the deal. The deal in the Budget Control Act said that we are going to reduce the growth in spending. We were on track—over 10 years—to grow spending \$10 trillion. Under the Budget Control Act, we were going to allow spending to increase, but it would only increase \$8 trillion, not \$10 trillion.

Now we are told that the Budget Control Act, which includes the sequester—we can't live with it. Growing and spending \$8 trillion is not enough; we have to grow spending even more. Every time some worthy cause is brought before the Senate, we take the easy way out. We come up with a gimmick pay-for or we just violate the budget and spend the money anyway. What good is it to have a Ryan-Murray budget agreement or a Budget Control Act if nobody adheres to it?

Second, one of the big reasons our country is going broke is the philosophy of “spend today and promise to pay for it tomorrow.” Here is what a new Bloomberg analysis—an independent group—concluded:

Since December 2013 [three months ago] the Republican House and the Democratic Senate have approved more than \$40 billion worth of spending “offsets” in the form of cuts that would take place in 2023 at the earliest or timing shifts in policy to bring savings into the 10-year window . . .

Both of these gimmicks are not legitimate, will not work, and have been criticized by independent groups that are concerned about the future of the Republic.

Third, the promised revenue offsets are phony savings. The offsets come from something called “pension smoothing”—wow, what is “pension smoothing”?—and “prepayment of premiums to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.” These are two popular schemes—double counting and timing shifts—that allow companies to prepay their payments for up to 5 years. In good times companies can pay ahead to the PBGC trust fund and Congress can take the money out the backdoor and spend it on—in this case—unemployment. In bad times this will leave the taxpayer further on the hook if PBGC has to take over a failed pension plan. It is taking money out of the plan that was supposed to be set up to guarantee and insure pensions.

I realize some of this sounds complex, but that is the problem: the big spenders in Washington have turned bilking taxpayers into an art form. Some spend their whole time trying to come up with a gimmick to get around the actual requirement, which is for us to set priorities and to recognize we cannot fund everything we would like to fund.

If we have a new idea for a new program, the Budget Control Act says: OK, do it, but you have to do it within the spending limits. You have to find some spending reduction to justify a new spending increase. That is what we agreed to, and that is what the President of the United States signed into law. He also signed Ryan-Murray into law. Is he here advocating responsible action? No, he is here supporting the Democratic leadership to push these budget-busting provisions and is not properly paying for them. Frankly, that is a disappointment.

The President of the United States is the chief person who talks to the American people. He has yet to look them in the eye and tell them we are on an unsustainable course, and we are going to have to tighten our belts. Instead, every time he talks, he talks about a new spending. A new program that spends more, in essence, is borrowing more and increasing our debt even further.

In the few months since Ryan-Murray was passed, the Senate—driven by a Democratic majority—has passed five bills that busted through the Ryan-Murray limits. There have been five bills that busted the budget. We just agreed to it, and they just voted for it 3 months ago.

They say these are all important measures and we have to pass them, so we should disregard those prior promises we made to the American people. The whole point of a spending limit is to make Congress set priorities. If you feel you have legislation that needs to pass, it is your duty to find a way to pay for it within the limits of spending we agreed to.

This is not a radical concept. This is responsible governance. It is done in cities and States all over America. They are living within their means. They are tightening up their efficiencies in productivity. People holler and wail whenever they make those cuts, but those cities, counties, and States are still standing. They have not been sucked into the ocean. They are still operating. They are going to be leaner, more efficient, and more productive as the result of going through a tight budget time. As money rises, and hopefully the economy bounces back, they will be in a better position in the future to serve the taxpayers of their communities efficiently.

Here are the budget violations in the pending bill, and these budget violations were all confirmed. I am the ranking Republican of the Budget Committee, and the Democratic chairman, Senator MURRAY, is a fine and fair chairman of the committee. Her team has acknowledged these violations of the budget, and as a result, it is subject to a budget point of order. There is not a dispute about what I am saying today.

There is \$9.9 billion in spending in excess of the top-line outlays for fiscal year 2014 set by the Ryan-Murray spending agreement. There is also another violation of the Budget Control Act because there is \$9.9 billion of spending in excess of the Finance Committee's allocations.

The committees have certain allocations. The Finance Committee has a certain allocation, and now it is spending \$9.9 billion more. How much is \$9.9 billion? Well, in Alabama we have a lean State government, and I am proud of it. My State's budget is about \$2 billion. This is \$9.9 billion, and it is in violation of our agreement.

Also, there is a \$10.7 billion increase in long-term deficits in the decade beyond the budget window that is subject to a budget point of order, and that is in violation of the budget.

Ordinarily, we would be able to raise a point of order to enforce all three of these violations. However, two of these points of order were wiped away by a loophole created in the language of the Ryan-Murray legislation. I warned them that it was in there, and I urged my colleagues not to adopt it, but it was adopted anyway. Two of the budget points of order I just mentioned are not subject to floor action and have been eliminated, basically, through the use of the deficit-neutral reserve fund. At the time of the Ryan-Murray deal's consideration, the Budget Committee staff—my staff—did the work and we warned that the 57 deficit-neutral reserve funds in the Ryan-Murray bill would be used to increase spending above the spending limits. We warned that would happen. The way that works is the majority can get around the budget rules that limit spending if they propose to offset new spending with new higher taxes.

So we are witnessing today exactly what I warned would happen: The mi-

nority has lost the procedural tool to block spending increases as long as they pay for it with more taxes.

What we agreed to under the Budget Control Act was that we couldn't spend above this limit, and if we raised taxes, it would be used to reduce the deficit. So now we have been able to switch that around so the raising of taxes is allowed to increase new spending.

These deficit reserve funds have been used by Senator REID and the majority to pass a proposed additional \$13 billion in spending above the caps already. However, the unemployment bill still triggers a long-term deficit point of order because it uses revenue timing shifts to conceal long-term deficit impact. So it is still in violation of the budget, even though two of the points of order are gone.

We do need to look at the long-term deficit picture. It is good that we still at least have that point of order we can raise. We can't just spend today because it fits within the 10-year window and somehow looks OK, when we know in the outyears it is going to add to the deficit of the United States. So the budget drafters and the BCA people have language in to prohibit that, rightly so. The problem is we won't adhere to it.

Last year, we paid our creditors \$221 billion in interest payments—\$221 billion on our roughly \$17 trillion debt. That is a huge amount of money. The Federal highway bill is \$40 billion. Aid to education—a whole bunch of programs we have—\$100 billion in total. The Defense budget is \$500 billion. We paid our creditors last year \$221 billion in interest alone on the debt. That is enough to pay for 172 weeks of unemployment benefits for everyone collecting at the end of last year. Over the course of the next 10 years, according to CBO, we will spend a cumulative \$5.8 trillion in interest payments on our debt. Over the next 10 years, CBO—our accounting firm that tries to do the right thing every day and tells us what is going to happen with our budget—tells us we are going to spend over \$5 trillion, almost \$6 trillion, in interest in the next 10 years—money that could be used to help people, to rebuild our infrastructure, to fix crumbling roads and bridges. At today's levels, that \$5.8 trillion could pay for a great amount of great things.

The CBO also told us that 10 years from today, the 1-year annual interest payment will not be \$221 billion, it will be \$880 billion—\$880 billion, an increase of over \$650 billion in interest payments each year—not one time, but that year alone we will pay \$600 billion more in interest. So how can we fund programs? Isn't it going to crowd out spending we need?

Washington is squandering our national inheritance. We are a nation deeply in debt. I would say to my colleagues that every time you violate our budget limits—because I am not voting for it—every time you add more to the Nation's credit card, you are increasing

the interest burden that is crushing America, and you reduce the amount of money that will be available to spend on whatever program you would like to spend it on as the years go by. Interest costs represent the fastest growing item in our budget. How much money will there be left over for your chosen government projects when our interest payment reaches almost \$1 trillion a year? CBO says that by 2024, it will hit \$880 billion. How many more years will it take, 2 or 3, to reach \$1 trillion?

We must help the unemployed, no doubt about it. We need to help them get better jobs, more jobs, and better pay, and we have to do so without adding more to the debt. That is what is placing a wet blanket over the American economy.

We need to produce more American energy. We can do that.

We need to streamline our Tax Code to lower rates, close loopholes, and boost economic growth. We need to eliminate regulations that are reducing productive activities and sending jobs overseas.

We need to endorse a trade policy that defends the American worker from unfair trade practices. Too much of that is occurring. We don't need to lose a single job to unfair trade practices.

We need an immigration policy that serves the interests of the American worker. At a time of high unemployment, the very idea the Senate would pass a bill that would permanently double the number of guest workers who can enter the country boggles the mind. That, in addition to the fact they would legalize 11 million and increase the annual flow of immigrants into the country from 1 million a year—the most generous of any Nation in the world—to 1.5 million. In effect, under the bill that passed this Senate, we would be providing permanent legal status to about 30 million people in the next 10 years. Our current law allows for 1 million a year—about 10 million over the next 10 years. Is it any wonder people are having a hard time getting a job today?

There is not a tight labor market out there; there is a loose labor market. How do I know? Because wages are going down. If employers are desperate and need more workers and can't find them, why aren't they having to pay higher wages to get good workers?

We have to stand up. The American people need to know what is happening to them.

What is the solution, our colleagues say? Well, unemployment is too high and wages are not going up; let's borrow more money and spend it by sending out unemployment checks to people who are unemployed because somebody illegally here took a job they could have taken.

There is no doubt about this: We need to create and transform the welfare office into an office that transforms the lives of people who are struggling today. We have 40 job programs, at least. We have more than 80 different

means-tested social programs. Those all need to be consolidated. There needs to be one central place where an American who is hurting, who is out of work and needs help, may be given financial help, but also counseled and provided training in the things they might need to get a job. Maybe instead of a subsidy while they're unemployed, individuals need help with transportation to go to work. Maybe they need help relocating to another town where the jobs are readily available.

This idea that we just continue to spend more and more on attempting to help people by giving them money without helping them transform their lives and become productive has to end. In fact, all the means-tested programs all added up amount to more than \$750 billion, which is more than all the other individual programs we spend money on—more than Social Security, more than Medicare, more than Medicaid, more than the Defense Department.

This country has some challenges in front of it. If we would respond with classic American values of hard work, individual responsibility, and our technology and training, we could turn this country around. But we don't have any leadership in that regard. Any change, any suggestions that we would reduce a subsidy program in order to fund job training or even fund unemployment compensation is a nonstarter around here, it appears.

I am worried about where we are. This unemployment insurance violates the budget. We should not pass it. We should do it within the budget and we need to analyze it carefully to make sure we are doing it in a way that actually helps those we intend to help.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I came to the floor today with the intention of asking unanimous consent to pass H.R. 3521, which we have heard a lot about on the floor lately between Senator VITTER and Senator SANDERS. This bill would authorize the construction of 27 veterans clinics—2 of them in our State, Louisiana, 1 in Lake Charles and 1 in Lafayette.

It is a long and sad story about why these clinics have not been built. I will get into that in a minute. As you can see, Texas, California, Florida, Georgia, and other States are affected. I know the Senators from those States support what we are trying to do.

Yesterday or the day before, my colleague came to the floor to call me "ineffective." I would like to say that I was a little bit shocked to hear that. I

have been called many things on the floor of this Senate—hardheaded, stubborn, tenacious, the Senator who never quits. I have never been called ineffective, so it was a little bit shocking.

What I can say is that I think I have spent 18 years on the floor of the Senate and here working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle and developing very strong friendships, very good relationships and trusting friendships that I think have accrued in large measure in a very beneficial way to the State I represent and to the region of the country I am also so proud to represent, the gulf coast.

Maybe my colleague was having a bad day. I am going to let it go, but it was a little shocking to hear that word.

Back to the issue. The issue is quite serious. The issue is that we have had a process of building veterans clinics in this country a certain way for a very long time. About 3 years ago CBO kind of out of the blue decided to change the scoring mechanism—instead of the way we were doing it through a leasing process, change the scoring system to cause the budget problem, the constraints in the budget to not allow us to move forward with the construction of these veterans facilities.

But added to that change, what is really happening in Louisiana and why this is such an important issue for us is that we were scheduled to build our two clinics and had waited in line patiently for many years. Our clinics were getting ready to be built in Lafayette and Lake Charles, which are a very important part of our outreach to the tens of thousands of veterans in our State.

The Veterans' Administration itself made a very serious mistake, which they have admitted in writing, verbally. General Shinseki has been down to our State to visit these sites, to talk with many of us in Louisiana about how unfortunate it was that mistakes in the bidding process were made—not by us, not by the State, not by the locals, but by the Federal Government. Because of these mistakes, our process of building these clinics was delayed.

That is why House Member BOUSTANY—a wonderful colleague and a dear friend and a great leader—has been leading the effort. These are basically in his district. He and I have been working very closely to try to bring to the attention of the leadership here the fact that they made the mistake, not us. We should not have to pay the penalty because of that.

Then, in the midst of that fight, this new scoring mechanism came down.

Now we cannot get out from underneath either the offset required or the new process required to get our clinics built. It has nothing to do with need—we are at the top of that list. We have the need. We have the veterans. We have the commitment of the Federal Government to get these built.

All of our delegation has been working very closely to try to get these

clinics built. I am happy to say that I am here today—as I have always been on this issue—supporting it and will ask in just a minute—I wanted to ask but will not ask in just a minute—for unanimous consent to build these clinics without an offset, just as the House bill passed. It is a \$1.6 billion charge. It would move without an offset. That is what the House voted on. It was a huge vote, 346 votes, Republicans and Democrats. I think when we have a vote like that, we need to really pay attention over here. They voted to build these clinics at a cost of \$1.6 billion without an offset.

That is what I am going to ask for. Senator COBURN will object. He has let me know he will object. Unfortunately, because of personal reasons, he is unable to be here today. So out of respect for the process of the Senate and out of courtesy, I will not be asking for that unanimous consent now, but I will be asking for it early next week.

Just to be clear, it will be a unanimous consent to build these 27 clinics based on the House vote without this bill going back to the House, going straight to the President's desk for signature by the President.

The offset the Senator from Louisiana offered is a bogus offset. We have a letter from CBO that I would like to read into the RECORD. The junior Senator from Louisiana offered his offset to supposedly raise the \$1.6 billion that will pay for this. This is from the CBO analysis.

It says: Based on preliminary estimates of the amendment offered by Senator VITTER, based on the information of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs and their current practices and joint purchases of prescription drugs, I do not estimate any savings for drug purchases relative to current law. My preliminary estimate of the amendment would be a minimal discretionary cost of less than \$500,000.

There is no money to be saved by the amendment offered by Senator VITTER, so I would be offering the bill to build these clinics with no offset, and that is what the House passed. It will go directly to the President's desk, and we will resolve the problem for these States. Then we will finally figure out a way to get back on track building clinics that we need and figure out a way to pay for these clinics in the future, but these clinics got stuck in kind of a technical bureaucratic mess in the recalculation. Ours, in particular, were caught because they should have been built in the 2 years before this new scoring process came to be, which is why Louisiana is having a particularly difficult time.

But as the record will show, our entire delegation has supported this effort. I honor the leadership of Congressman BOUSTANY from the House, who has literally worked on this tirelessly for 6 years. I thank the House delegation for sending this bill over.

I will not require an offset. The offset Senator VITTER offered is bogus.

As soon as Senator COBURN can get back, which will be early next week, I will be offering this unanimous consent. Unfortunately, I understand he will object to it because he believes we should find a way to pay for it. There might be other objections as well, but I am looking forward to the debate with Senator COBURN next week.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Ms. HIRONO). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

GM RECALL

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, yesterday's hearing of the commerce committee's subcommittee on consumer safety provided a powerful and important moment in our legislative process, and I want to thank my colleague, the chairman of that subcommittee, Chairman MCCASKILL, for enabling us to come together, as well as my other colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Senators KLOBUCHAR and BOXER and AYOTTE, for their very insightful and significant questions and comments on a challenge that should unite us on both sides of the aisle—the tragic events, death and life-changing injuries to unsuspecting drivers who were victims of a defective ignition switch in automobiles manufactured by GM; a car defect that should have been fixed, disclosed, and remedied before these deaths occurred.

I want to thank the families of the victims of these defective cars for coming forward and being at that hearing yesterday and sharing their stories with me and others. They are doing a great public service through their courage and strength.

I want to also thank Mary Barra, the CEO of GM. As I said to her then, and I will repeat now, I admire her fortitude and her service in coming forward to face the questions of our committee and be the face of General Motors on the issues that confront us now in car safety. I admire her career at GM—an engineer who has risen through the ranks, a second-generation employee at an iconic, great American manufacturing company.

I have long admired that company and the products it has produced. They have enriched the lives of so many Americans over the years. My hope is this hearing and this process will be a turning point for the company in facing these car safety challenges.

I admire greatly also its dealers and employees. Some of them have contacted me, especially Connecticut dealers, telling me how they are reaching out proactively to the drivers of these defective vehicles, asking them to bring them to their company so they can be repaired before they do further damage.

This great company can reclaim its iconic brand and luster by breaking with its past, and Mary Barra has the opportunity for this historic contribution. As I said to her yesterday, she may be surrounded by a phalanx of lawyers and public relations people who will advise her to be cautious, to be timid, and to be reactive, but now is the time for her to seize the initiative and take three simple steps as a beginning.

No. 1, establish a compensation fund for all who have suffered damage from this defective ignition switch which caused cars to crash, some of them to burn—victims who have suffered injuries and death as well as economic damage. No. 2, provide a warning—a clear, strong warning—to drivers still behind the wheels of vehicles that still have this defective ignition switch. The cars are under recall but unrepaired. People are still driving them, many not knowing the full risk they have undertaken by continuing to drive. A strong warning to ground those vehicles until they are repaired is what is needed now.

Third, support our legislation. Senator MARKEY and I have offered legislation that would provide for better reporting by car companies, a stronger accountability system, and better disclosure through a database to consumers so they will know what the risks are before they take them and can make informed choices about what they drive and when.

These steps are well warranted by the past misconduct of GM, but they are also potentially a model for other companies in doing the right thing—facing the truth, telling truth to power, and making sure innocent consumers are protected against harms that may not be known to them.

She had the opportunity to break with the past culture—a culture of deniability and of deception. Deception is what happened at GM. These ignition switches were known to be defective. As early as 2001, year after year there were reliable and material facts indicating to GM it had a responsibility to fix these vehicles. Yet they took no action to repair them, to recall them, to inform consumers. And the fix was not a major costly one. It was \$2 per vehicle—easily done. Yet in 2005, 2006, GM made a business decision that the price was too high, the time was too long, and it continued to provide those vehicles for sale to consumers.

Then it deceived the U.S. Government. I have already spoken on the floor about section 612 of the agreement GM signed that indicated there were no material adverse facts at the time it was bailed out in 2009 as part of the reorganization. That deception is bad enough, but what happened as a result of that reorganization was a shield from liability, a form of immunity against legal accountability granted only because GM failed to disclose to the United States and to the bankruptcy court that it might well be lia-

ble and in fact was responsible for these defective vehicles. That shield from liability still bedevils the victims of injuries, death, and economic damage as they seek to hold GM accountable because GM itself is invoking that shield in courts today around the country and seeking to dismiss actions brought against it, seeking to return them to the bankruptcy court where the black hole of discharge will prevent recovery.

I welcome the independent investigation GM has undertaken by a very credible and respected former U.S. attorney. I welcome the appointment of consultant Ken Feinberg, also well respected, with experience and expertise in providing compensation. But GM itself has still said there is no compensation fund and it will not commit to one. And as able as these two individuals are, the question remains, what will it take? What facts or evidence will be required to persuade GM to do the right thing?

I think there is more than ample evidence—in fact, abundant evidence now—as to what the path should be, and I urged it yesterday on Mary Barra. GM should very simply do the right thing now: Establish a compensation fund sufficient to seek to make these victims whole. Nothing will erase or even ease the pain and grief suffered by these families and loved ones, but justice has its own virtue. GM has the rare opportunity in American corporate life to do justice and not wait for its consultants and its investigators to “work through the issues here.” Working through the issues here means doing right by those victims.

Yesterday I asked Ms. Barra about the safety of the vehicles still on the road. She assured me they were fine to drive—as long as the key was not overloaded, as long as the ignition switch was used alone without additional keys. She assured me there was no more risk to drive one of those vehicles than any other in use today.

I asked her about the contradiction of that statement with the recall notice itself. I am going to display it here. It says that these vehicles are risky to drive, in effect, if your keyring is carrying added weight or—and I emphasize that it is an “or”—there are rough road conditions or jarring or impact-related events.

Unfortunately, too many of our highways and our byways have rough road conditions or provide the opportunity for jarring events.

Ms. Barra may believe tests and analyses done by her company she referred to yesterday assured her and GM that driving these defective vehicles is safe as long as it is done with only the ignition key, without the added weight of additional keys, but she must know, because she has children—as do I and most Members of this body—that they will drive with additional keys on that ignition switch. In fact, hundreds of thousands—millions of Americans have no idea that driving these vehicles with

added keys provides that kind of potentially fatal risk. When these cars lose power, they lose steering, they lose their brakes, and they lose their airbags. Losing power, brakes, and steering is terrifying, but airbags are essential if power is lost and the car crashes, as victims of these crashes have discovered, to their sorrow and the grief of their families.

This kind of pothole, a rough road condition, a potentially jarring event—how common are they? This photograph is from Surf Avenue in Stratford, a beautiful town along the coast of Connecticut. I could take hundreds of these photographs from Connecticut, which has better roads than many other places in our State or country. They are as common as the roads themselves.

Those risks are GM's responsibility to warn. It has failed to do so. I asked Ms. Barra what evidence or facts would persuade her to issue a stronger warning. The recall notice itself said that risk increases if your keyring is carrying added weight—such as more keys or the key fob itself; the key fob alone adds additional weight—or your vehicle is experiences rough road conditions or other jarring or impact-related events. What would persuade her to issue this warning to consumers: Stop driving these cars until they are repaired.

I specifically asked her whether evidence about drivers who have, in fact, experienced the power loss without adding additional weight to their keyrings—if they encountered these kinds of conditions and their cars shut down—would persuade her to change her view. She answered to me:

Senator, if I had any data, any incidents where with just the key, or the key and the ring, there was any risk, I would ground these vehicles across the country.

Ms. Barra, let me tell you about Laura Valle. In March of 2014, Ms. Valle, who owns a 2007 silver Chevrolet Cobalt, received GM's recall letter instructing her to remove all items from her keyring, leaving only the vehicle key. As the recall notice instructed, she continued to drive her vehicle using only the vehicle key. Yet, while driving with a friend, she lost power. Fortunately, she was on the right side of the road and she was able to pull the vehicle to a stop.

There will be other instances. I know they will come forward to me, to my colleagues, and to lawyers who may represent them.

Today I call on GM to issue that warning. There is more than ample evidence or, as Ms. Barra said, "data," "incidents" where the key or just the key and the ring led to the vehicle stopping not because there was added weight but because they encountered rough road conditions or jarring events, which could consist of simply leaning the wrong way or the driver's knee moving.

These vehicles create unacceptable risks before they are repaired. The advice GM should give to people is this:

Bring these cars to be repaired immediately. Stop driving them. In the meantime, use the loaners GM has offered.

GM has the opportunity to avoid another business decision. It may be more costly to provide loaners, but in the long run they will save lives and dollars.

Finally, I ask GM to do the right thing again by supporting the legislation Senator MARKEY and I have introduced. This legislation is critically important to the future. It can't correct the past, but it can make sure that accidents are reported; that defects are made known to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration; and that there are not only incentives for reporting but there is increased accountability for failing to do so; and require NHTSA to establish a publicly accessible, searchable database that will allow drivers and consumer safety advocates to connect the dots. Companies that are unwilling to connect those dots will be brought to justice, will be required to recall these vehicles and find out about defective models in time to save lives.

Ms. Barra has not yet committed to supporting this bill. In my view, it is her responsibility to do so. It is the responsibility of GM to take this action now. She and GM have the opportunity to change corporate culture not only in that company but in others by setting a model—leading by example, not by their words at a Senate hearing or letters of apology but by action. Action speaks louder than words. Action speaks louder than the appointment of a consultant or an investigator whose report may not be made fully public.

Ms. Barra was unwilling to make that commitment yesterday. It is a corporate culture that refused to make a 57-cent change to car ignitions—or a \$2 change—even though that change would have saved lives. Now is the time to hold GM accountable, for GM to issue that warning that will help save others from a fate known only too well by those families who came to be with us yesterday.

I look forward to working with Ms. Barra, GM, my colleagues, and with all who are interested in improving car safety and to using this sad, tragic, unfortunate experience as a turning point and a teaching moment—a rare moment—of bipartisan action to make our roads safer.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor, and 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 South Carolina.

Mr. SCOTT. 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. SCOTT. Thank you, Madam President.

I rise today to discuss my two amendments to the legislation we have been debating this week. I think most of us would agree we need to give folks a hand up. That makes a lot of sense. But we also need to ensure they have a solid foundation on which it stands. The best way we can help the unemployed is to help them find a job. My amendments aim to do just that. First, we will restore the 40-hour workweek which was destroyed by ObamaCare. The employer mandate currently requires employers to provide health insurance to full-time employees, and the new definition of a full-time employee is 30 hours per workweek. As a result, employers are cutting hours for many of the employees to fewer than 30 hours per week.

I have heard from several employers at home in South Carolina, representing institutions as large as Clemson University and as small as the local surf shop that are suffering the consequences of this new 30-hour definition.

A few weeks ago I was on a bus in Charleston talking with some of my constituents. I started speaking with one young man who had just moved to South Carolina from Georgia looking for new opportunities. He worked for a restaurant and had recently received notice that his hours were getting cut. After talking with this young man for a few minutes, it became very clear to me that his pay was cut and his hours were dwindling as a direct result of the 30-hour rule. Not only was he losing 25 percent of his pay, he was losing the ability to work overtime.

According to the Hoover Institution, 2.6 million Americans are especially at risk of having their hours and wages cut like the young man with whom I was speaking. Of those 2.6 million Americans, 59 percent of them are between the ages of 19 and 34, 63 percent are women, and 90 percent do not have a college degree. Further, families most at risk are those with a median income, \$29,126.

Many of these millions of Americans who are earning hourly wages to support their family will see a 25-percent cut in their pay as employers struggle with the massive new costs forced on them by the Federal Government—their Federal Government. Thanks to ObamaCare, not only will these workers not have health insurance but they will no longer have full-time jobs. We must—and I want to emphasize we must—restore the 40-hour workweek, period.

My second amendment is the same as my SKILLS Act which I introduced as a part of my opportunity agenda earlier this year. It provides much needed reforms to modernize the government's bureaucratic means of workforce development and training programs. With 4 million jobs currently unfilled across our Nation today, including 65,000 jobs in South Carolina, job skills training is critical for folks looking for work. We have to make sure people are prepared

for continued success, and that starts with education and workforce training.

Thanks to the leadership of my colleague, Mrs. FOXF in the House, the SKILLS Act has already passed with some Democratic support on the other side of the Capitol. It is well past time for that to happen in the Senate, and I hope my colleagues will join me in providing more skills and more opportunities to develop the skills to put Americans back to work.

This is truly a conversation about jobs. How do we encourage job growth and stop the government from blocking job creation? It is a simple answer. These two amendments are steps in the right direction. Let's not let politics dictate the future of these two amendments. We can do better, and we should.

Thank you, Madam President, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2:30 p.m. today all postcloture time on the Reed of Rhode Island amendment No. 2874 be considered expired; that the following amendments be withdrawn: Nos. 2875, 2877, 2878; that Senator SESSIONS or designee then be recognized to raise a point of order against the Senator REED of Rhode Island amendment No. 2874; once the budget point of order is raised, Senator MURRAY or designee be recognized to make a motion to waive; the Senate then proceed to vote on the motion to waive; if the motion to waive is agreed to, the Senate then proceed to vote on adoption of the Reed of Rhode Island amendment No. 2874; that upon disposition of the Reed amendment, the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on H.R. 3979; that if cloture is invoked on the bill, no other amendments or motions be in order to the bill; that at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, April 7, all postcloture time be considered expired and the bill as amended, if amended, be read a third time and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill, as amended, if amended.

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

The Senator from Washington.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

Mrs. MURRAY. There are a number of women who are going to be joining me today. They are leaders in this Capitol who are working each and every day, both here and back in their home States, to give more of their constituents a chance to succeed. Today we are here to talk about one small idea that stands to make a huge difference in the lives of our constituents, and for women in particular, and that is the idea that if you are putting in 40 or 50 or 60 hours of work per week you should be able to put food on your table and pay your bills, and you won't be stuck below the poverty line.

This idea could change the lives of millions of Americans if Congress simply acted and raised the minimum

wage. We need to act now because right now one in four women—one in four women—is making minimum wage today. That is 15 million American women who are making the equivalent of about 2 gallons of gas per hour. Are we prepared to tell them that should be enough to support themselves and their kids?

In fact, as I am sure you will hear repeated by others today, nearly two-thirds of those who earn minimum wage or less are women. This is coming at a time when more women are now depended upon as the sole income earners in their families. Right now in cities and towns across America there are millions of those women who are getting up at the crack of dawn for work every day. They are stuck living in poverty. They cannot save for a car, much less a house. They cannot pay for school so they can get better skills and a better paying job. They cannot even afford to provide their children with more winter clothes or basic medical care. That is not how it is supposed to work in America, the country where you are told if you work hard and play by the rules you can get ahead.

So when we talk about the minimum wage, let's be clear: Raising the minimum wage is about bringing back our middle class. I am proud that in my State of Washington we are taking the lead. In our State our workforce enjoys the highest minimum wage in the country, and I am glad to point out to all of our friends on the other side of the aisle, Washington State's economy has not been negatively impacted by our high minimum wage. In fact, our economy has benefited from a high minimum wage.

Job growth has continued at a rate above the national average. Payrolls in our restaurants and bars have expanded due to people having more money in their pockets to spend at dinner or a night on the town, and poverty in Washington State has trailed the national level for at least 7 years now. That is why I support making the national minimum wage \$10.10 for families from Washington to Wisconsin, from Massachusetts to Minnesota and Hawaii and everywhere in-between.

It is not enough to make you rich, but it is a small raise for millions of families who desperately need it. It is a small raise for moms and dads who need help. We have to do more. Today, two-thirds of families rely on income from both parents, but thanks to our outdated Tax Code, a woman thinking about reentering the workforce as a second earner in her family may face higher tax rates than her husband. That is unfair, and it has to change.

Last week I introduced the 21st Century Worker Tax Cut Act which will help solve that problem by giving struggling two-earner families with children a tax deduction on that second earner's income.

My hope is that over the coming weeks we can all come together in this Chamber on behalf of millions of Amer-

ican women who—like my own mother when I was growing up—are the sole caregiver and breadwinner in their families.

I hope our colleagues have gotten a sense of how the current \$7.25 an hour translates to a grocery trip for a family of four, shopping for school supplies or even how it impacts people's daily commutes.

That is why we are here today—to give that mom or that dad a fair shot at succeeding in America. I am proud to be joined today by a number of my colleagues in the Senate who are strong women and fighting for women and men in their home States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. SCHATZ). The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, when my grandparents were raising me, I learned that if you work hard and play by the rules, you should be able to get ahead. As I traveled throughout the State of Wisconsin meeting with Wisconsinites I know that my fellow Wisconsinites learned that very same thing when they were growing up. Today people are working as hard as ever, and they deserve to get ahead, but many are working full time and even two jobs to make ends meet. Yet far too many are just barely getting by or living in poverty.

As I have traveled my State, Wisconsinites have told me that the powerful and the well-connected seem to get to write all of their own rules, while the concerns and struggles of the working poor and middle-class families go unnoticed here in Washington. They feel like our economic system is tilted towards those at the very top and that our political system exists to protect those unfair advantages. The House budget introduced by Congressman PAUL RYAN—from my own home State—is a perfect example of that. Instead, we should make sure that everybody gets a fair shot.

I am really proud to join my colleagues this afternoon to deliver our own call for action. It is simple. The time is now to give hard-working Americans a raise. We can do that if both parties work together to reward hard work so an honest day's work pays more. We can do that by raising the minimum wage.

I believe we need to build a fairer economy and grow the middle class. I believe our economy is strongest when we expand opportunity for everyone, and that is why I am an original co-sponsor of the Minimum Wage Fairness Act. Raising the minimum wage would improve the economic security of families across the country and strengthen the overall economy. It would give 28 million American workers a raise—including over 595,000 Wisconsinites—and will benefit more than a quarter million Wisconsin children who would have at least one parent getting that raise.

It would mean workers in Wisconsin would have \$816 million more to spend

in local businesses, which according to the Economic Policy Institute would boost Wisconsin's GDP by \$516.6 million and generate 1,800 new jobs after only 3 years.

Because women are disproportionately low-wage workers—making up two-thirds of low-wage workers in the country—raising the minimum wage would also directly impact millions of women across America.

Nadine, from Appleton, WI, would directly benefit from a raise. Nadine is a 20-year-old woman who makes the tipped minimum wage. She works as a server in a family restaurant. I probably need to remind some people that the tipped minimum wage is only \$2.13 an hour. Nadine got her first job at age 14 so she could start saving for college. She started college but had stopped attending because she simply could not afford it. She even moved from her small hometown to a larger city in search of a better job so she would be able to return to school.

In telling her story, Nadine writes:

Raising the minimum wage is not an abstract notion in my life. It is a real factor that affects me in several important ways. First, and most importantly, it is important to me because I am a young woman and I am working to support myself. I had to put going to college on hold because I couldn't afford it. Without a higher income, I worry I won't ever be able to transition from dead-end jobs into a long-term career.

Nadine currently averages \$200 to \$300 per week. She spends \$50 on gas every week because she can't afford a more fuel-efficient car. She eats simply in order to budget \$30 each week for food. The rest of her income goes to rent and other bills. Needless to say, it doesn't go far.

Nadine picks up every shift available to her and doesn't rely on government assistance of any kind. She worries she will never be able to experience having a family and finishing college, traveling, and just having a fair shot at building a stronger future for herself.

Women such as Nadine make up 72 percent of workers in predominately tipped occupations. Workers in tipped occupations are twice as likely as other workers to experience poverty, and servers are almost three times as likely to be in poverty.

If for no other reason, we need to raise the minimum wage because in America no one who works full time should have to live or raise a family in poverty. Raising the full minimum wage and the tipped wage will give 15 million women a raise—including 330,000 in my State of Wisconsin. Women who make up 80 percent of America's 2.8 million working single parents would benefit from an increase in the minimum wage, thereby reducing child poverty among female-headed households.

According to the Center for American Progress, raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour would reduce dependence on government programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which we com-

monly call SNAP, which would see nearly 3.5 million fewer enrollments and save \$46 billion over the decade. Raising the minimum wage will help make progress towards closing the gender pay gap.

I look forward to getting the job done and reward the hard work of women across our great country.

I look forward to getting the job done and passing the Minimum Wage Fairness Act so American women will get the raise they deserve.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am so proud to join Senator MURRAY, who organized several of the women here, to speak out in favor of the minimum wage increase for the workers of America.

My colleagues have said it well, but it bears repeating: No one in America—male or female—should have to live in poverty after putting in a full day's work. Yet that is the case today.

We should give hard-working Americans a fair shot to get ahead so they can raise their families. Everyone deserves that fair shot, and that is why Democrats have a fair-shot agenda. Right now we don't seem to have many Republicans joining us in our desire to raise the minimum wage so that it gets people above the poverty line when they work full time.

I would argue that anyone who votes against that level of pay—which is about \$10.10 an hour to get a worker right above poverty—simply wants to keep people in poverty, and that is not the American way. Right now a mom who is working full time and makes minimum wage earns just \$290 a week. That is just \$15,000 a year, which is below the poverty rate for a single mom.

No mom or dad should come home from a full day's work and have to worry about whether they can feed their children or whether they can afford a roof over the heads of their kids.

I see Senator WARREN is here, and she has brought such attention and focus to the unfairness in the number I am about to say. There are 400 families in America that control as much wealth as 150 million Americans. To hear people in this Chamber—who do just fine supporting their families—oppose the minimum wage is absolutely, in my view, a morally wrong position. They have their right to it, but I think it is morally wrong.

The minimum wage is a two-thirds problem for women. Let's be clear. Almost two-thirds of workers earning minimum wage or less are women, two-thirds of tipped minimum wage workers are women, and in two-thirds of American families, women are the breadwinners or co-breadwinners. We have a two-thirds problem. Women are overrepresented in low-wage jobs, and that is why I am so proud that next week Senator MIKULSKI is going to lead us toward equal pay for equal work. It

is a wonderful bill. I think it is called the Paycheck Fairness Act.

When we lift the salaries of these workers, it helps entire families. Senator HARKIN's bill, which we are all supporting, will benefit 14 million children. We have to do it for workers like Wendy Arellano, who works directing vehicles at an airport and has two other jobs, but she still doesn't make enough to support her two daughters.

We should do it for women like Shareeka Elliot, who works all night as a janitor scrubbing the floors and cleaning the toilets but still doesn't make enough to get her kids above the poverty line.

We should do it for women like Nyah Potts, who is working so hard to finish her college degree, but she is struggling to make enough to support herself and her son. I joined Nyah at a press conference last week.

In closing, I want to talk for a minute about the tipped minimum wage. This is a disgrace because the tipped minimum wage at the Federal Government is \$2.13 an hour. We all know—because it has been studied—that there are waitresses and there are waiters, and most of the less-expensive restaurants hire women, and they don't get big tips. If there is a storm, and suppose nobody comes into the restaurant that day, they get paid \$2.13 an hour. This bill does move us up to 70 percent of minimum wage for tipped workers. Personally, I think there ought to be no difference. In California, we pay our workers—all of them, tipped or not—the full minimum wage. And no one can tell me that California's restaurants are suffering. They are some of the most successful in the country and in the world.

So let's be clear. History shows raising the minimum wage doesn't hurt the economy.

Now we will hear our colleagues on the Republican side cite the CBO study that said we could lose hundreds of thousands of jobs. That study is an outlier.

In 1956, the minimum wage was a buck. I hate to say it, but I remember those days. It was a dollar. And I remember, I worked my first job as a telephone operator for Hilton Hotels, and I earned the minimum wage. Actually, then, because I was a teenager, it was half the minimum wage, so I worked for 50 cents an hour. I was not very good at that job, but I tried hard. But let's say Congress had that attitude then: We are not going to raise the minimum wage because we will lose jobs. The minimum wage would still be a dollar an hour. How ludicrous.

Since then—since 1956—we have raised the minimum wage 18 times. Guess what. Did we lose jobs? No. The economy grew by more than 80 million jobs.

I know others are waiting to speak. I am so excited to finally get to vote on paycheck fairness and on minimum wage. All we Democrats are saying is, let's give Americans a fair shot.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I will be making a point of order in a moment against the bill before us because it violates the budget we agreed to. I will share briefly for a few moments—the order is that we are to commence voting at 2:30. I believe that is correct. I think I was approved for 5 minutes. If the Chair would notify me when my time is up, because others I see here might want to speak.

In August of 2001, this Congress—House and Senate, Republicans and Democrats—along with the President of the United States, agreed on the Budget Control Act. It limited spending—the growth of spending only. How much did it limit the growth? Well, at that time we were projected to spend \$10 trillion more over the next 10 years than we were currently spending. So the Budget Control Act didn't cut the budget, really, although a few agencies in the short term have had reductions, Defense being the primary one. But over the 10 years, under the Budget Control Act we would grow spending \$8 trillion instead of \$10 trillion—not enough of a reduction in spending, I say to my colleagues, to cause this country to sink into the ocean; that is for sure. Really, not enough, because our deficits are so high.

In December of last year, this Congress passed the Ryan-Murray Budget Act which amended the spending agreement we struck in the Budget Control Act. The Ryan-Murray bill broke the budget agreement and allowed more money to be spent than we had agreed to in the BCA, but it capped overall spending for the next 8 years. So that was the agreement. It passed, and the President signed it 3 months ago. It is now the law of the land.

What I would say to my colleagues is this—today is the third or fourth time we will vote on legislation, since the Ryan-Murray spending agreement passed, that busts the budget—that busts the spending limits we agreed to.

There are multiple budget violations against this bill. Two of them are voided by loophole language in the Ryan-Murray legislation that people didn't fully understand at that time. That loophole language allows the use of a deficit-neutral reserve fund to, in effect, erase budget points of order. So two of the budget points of order that lie against this bill cannot be raised because a deficit-neutral reserve fund—which I think is a gimmick—essentially erases them. But one of the violations still remains, because this bill will add to the debt outside the 10-year window.

One of the things we have learned is that when we pass laws today that sound good—and sometimes those laws, even if they are within the budget window, they may, indeed, in the out years add to the debt of the United States. Kent Conrad, a Democrat and former chairman of the Budget Committee—it

was his language that created this long term point of order, because he was concerned we were passing things that might be OK within the budget window but were adding to the debt in the long term. So that is why we have this point of order.

The cost estimate from the Congressional Budget Office clearly shows that this UI bill violates that principle of the budget, and lays out the numbers that so say. Our chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator MURRAY, has acknowledged that this bill does, in fact, violate the budget.

But we need to stay within our budget. Violating the budget agreement is simply a refusal to make tough choices. We spend \$3,700 billion a year, and we can't find \$8 billion or \$9 billion in savings to fund a program that we think needs to be funded today like unemployment insurance? People want to deal with that and help people who are unemployed, and I understand that desire. But if we do so, we should do it by finding offsets, not spending more than we agreed.

People say we can raise taxes to pay for the new spending. Well, that violates the budget too, because our agreement says we can spend only so much. And if my colleagues want to raise taxes, I believe we ought to use that money to pay down the deficit, not grow the government.

This past year, we spent \$233 billion on interest on the debt, an amount that is virtually half the Defense budget. The highway bill is \$40 billion. In 10 years, the Congressional Budget Office—Dr. Elmendorf testified before the Budget Committee a few weeks ago—says that in 10 years, 1 year's interest payment on the debt of the United States of America would be \$880 billion. That is over \$650 billion more in 1 year on interest than we are paying today.

So you can see why we have to adhere to our promises to contain spending. We cannot continue to vote time and time again to violate the spending limits we agreed to. It just adds to the debt and to our interest payments on the debt. No wonder the American people are unhappy with us. This is irresponsible. I am confident we can find the \$9 billion or whatever we need to fund any program in this bloated government of ours. But, no, it won't even be discussed. There is no discussion about finding honest reductions in spending from places where money is wasted. Instead, we just come up with a plan that gimmicks the spending and adds to the long-term debt of the United States.

In conclusion, I would say it is quite clear that this legislation—the unemployment extension—will add to the long-term debt of the United States.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has spoken for 5 minutes.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, the pending measure, amendment No. 2874 to H.R. 3979, the vehicle for the unemployment insurance extension, violates section 311(b) of the fiscal year 2009

budget resolution by causing a net increase in the deficit over \$5 billion in the 10-year period from 2024 to 2033.

Therefore, I raise a point of order against this measure pursuant to section 311(b) of S. Con. Res. 70, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for fiscal year 2009.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and the waiver provisions of applicable budget resolutions, I move to waive all applicable sections of that act and applicable budget resolutions for purposes of the pending amendment, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote occur at the time set under the previous order.

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

The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an extension of time for 6 minutes to be divided equally between myself and Senator STABENOW.

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

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I will keep my remarks short because I know there are others who want to speak on why we need to raise the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10. I will focus on Hawaii.

In Hawaii, nearly 100,000 women would get a raise if we were to do this. That is one out of five women workers in Hawaii. The Presiding Officer and I are both from Hawaii. We know the high cost of living in Hawaii. Minimum wage amounts to about \$14,500 a year. The average rent for a one-bedroom residence in Hawaii is almost \$1,300 a month. That is more than \$15,000 a year. It is no wonder people in Hawaii have to work more than one job.

In Hawaii, tourism is our No. 1 industry. We have a lot of tipped workers. They work in our restaurants. Do my colleagues know there are many people who work in our restaurants who can't even afford to eat in the restaurant in which they work?

When we raise the minimum wage, we are going to enable a lot of families to not have to rely on various programs such as SNAP. In Hawaii, over 15,000 workers would no longer need these kinds of benefits.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, first let me say that we should be congratulating everyone who has gotten us to a point where we are going to be able to help people who have been

working hard to find a job and still have not found a job to put food on the table for their families and pay their rent. To be able to allow them to receive emergency unemployment assistance is incredibly important. The votes we are doing here are very important to give people who want a job and need a job a fair shot to be able to survive until they can get a job.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

I also want to speak for just a moment, as so many of my colleagues have today, about what it means for women to have a pay raise through the minimum wage because the minimum wage is very much a women's issue, as you have heard, because a disproportionate number of folks who are earning the minimum wage are, in fact, women. And it is not college students; the average age is about 30, 35 years old.

This is a critical issue for Michigan families, including 416,000 women in Michigan who would directly benefit from raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour and another 141,000 whose wages would also increase. This is not just about people earning the minimum wage; it is about lifting up wages, increasing purchasing power, and helping businesses large and small be able to get more customers because people can buy things because they have money in their pockets.

Let me repeat, in terms of the numbers for Michigan, 557,000 women in Michigan who are working hard and just want a fair shot—just a fair shot—to get ahead would benefit from the legislation the Senate will soon be voting on called the Minimum Wage Fairness Act.

Too many people, including far too many women, are simply trying to stay afloat, let alone get ahead. The minimum wage used to be worth more. Its value has eroded since it peaked back in 1968, and it is harder and harder for people to put food on the table and a roof over their family's heads.

Today, a single mom can clean houses and scrub floors for 40 hours a week—working hard—and still find that she earns less than the poverty level. There is something wrong with that. If you are going to work hard 40 hours a week, you ought to be able to lift your family out of poverty.

Work ought to be valued in this country. In fact, for a family of three, you are \$4,000 below the poverty line if you are working for the minimum wage. It is just not right.

To add insult to injury, if you compare that to the average CEO's salary today, you could put 933 minimum-wage workers, 933 women working hard—and I would daresay maybe harder than the folks who are at the top as CEOs—trying to put food on the table for their kids, buy them cloths, make sure they can care for them, 933 minimum-wage workers combined equals the salary of the average CEO.

So I would urge that we come together and look at this as Henry Ford

did 100 years ago in 1914 when he doubled the salary of his workers to \$5 a day. He lifted them up. The small businesses around his plant saw increases in their business and hired more people because more people had money in their pockets. They could come in and buy the food and goods.

We are talking about people working hard, again, every single day—moms who are cleaning hotel rooms and are on their feet all day; they are mopping floors, preparing food; they go home; they take care of their families. All they want is a fair shot to succeed and be able to make their lives and their children's lives better.

Let's have a strong, bipartisan vote on raising the minimum wage.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise in support of increasing the minimum wage. Congress needs to do away with wages that don't reward hard work and workplace policies that belong in an episode of "Mad Men." This Congress needs to do two things to make sure we give a fair shot to everyone and build a stronger middle class: raise the minimum wage and pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

The minimum wage is at an historic all-time low. It has lost 30 percent of its buying power compared to its peak buying power in 1968. The minimum wage only pays \$15,000 a year. That is \$4,000 below the poverty line for a family of three. Increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour would pay \$20,200 a year—lifting that family of three out of poverty.

What does increasing the minimum wage mean for Maryland? Increasing the minimum wage will give 450,000 workers in Maryland a raise. Increasing the minimum wage will improve the lives of 210,000 Maryland children because their parent just got a raise. When we raise the minimum wage, we all move a rung up on the opportunity ladder.

I am on the side of economic fairness and building a stronger middle class to bring opportunities to families across the Nation. That is why I am an enthusiastic cosponsor of the Fair Minimum Wage Act. This bill raises the minimum wage from \$7.25 per hour to \$10.10 an hour over 3 years and indexes the minimum wage to inflation in the future.

Everyone who works hard and plays by the rules deserves a fair shot at the American dream. That means raising the minimum wage so that hard work is worth it—because a full-time job shouldn't mean full time poverty.

The minimum wage for employees who earn tips is barely over \$2 per hour. The Fair Minimum Wage Act will slowly increase that base wage by less than \$1 a year until it reaches 70 percent of the regular minimum wage. Women are nearly three-quarters of workers earning tips at their jobs. For a hotel housekeeper in the western Maryland mountains, a hairdresser on the Eastern Shore, or a restaurant server in Baltimore or Bethesda, this

raise is economic security so that a slow week in an off-peak season doesn't mean below-poverty wages.

The minimum wage is a women's issue. Women make up two-thirds of minimum-wage workers nationwide. Congress needs to raise their wages and make sure they are not being redlined or sidelined by outdated policies or harassed and intimidated when seeking justice for pay discrimination.

Being a woman costs more, and women pay more for everything. Women pay more in medical costs than men—an estimated \$10,000 over a lifetime. Women are often responsible for child care. Women even get charged more for dry cleaning. We are charged more for our blouses than men's shirts, and we are tired of being taken to the cleaners. When we earn less, we are asked to pay more.

Women are almost half of the workforce and 40 percent of them are the sole breadwinners in their families. They are tired of being paid crumbs.

Women continue to make less. Women are still making only 77 cents for every \$1 a man makes. Women of color suffer even greater injustice. If you are African American, you earn 62 cents for every \$1 a man makes. If you are Hispanic, you earn 54 cents for every \$1 a man makes.

Everybody likes to say to us: Oh, you have come a long way. But I don't think we have come a long way. We have only gained 18 cents in 50 years.

By the time she retires, the average woman will lose more than \$431,000 over her lifetime because of the wage gap. That affects your Social Security and pension. It weakens your retirement security.

This is not about men versus women. It is about building a middle class. Wages have been flat for everyone. Men need a pay raise too. When they get it, we will stand shoulder to shoulder with them—because we all need a raise to raise our families.

The Fair Minimum Wage Act is about putting change in the lawbooks and change in family checkbooks. Women of America, it is time to suit up, square our shoulders, put on our lipstick, increase the minimum wage for everyone, and fight the fair pay revolution.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 2878, 2877, AND 2875
WITHDRAWN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, amendments Nos. 2878, 2877, and 2875 are withdrawn.

VOTE ON MOTION TO WAIVE

Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the motion to waive.

The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted "nay."

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 60, nays 36, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 99 Leg.]

YEAS—60

Baldwin	Heinrich	Murray
Begich	Heitkamp	Nelson
Bennet	Heller	Portman
Blumenthal	Hirono	Pryor
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Reed
Boxer	Kaine	Reid
Brown	King	Rockefeller
Cantwell	Kirk	Sanders
Cardin	Klobuchar	Schatz
Carper	Landrieu	Schumer
Casey	Leahy	Shaheen
Collins	Levin	Stabenow
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Donnelly	Markey	Udall (CO)
Durbin	McCaskill	Udall (NM)
Feinstein	Menendez	Walsh
Franken	Merkley	Warner
Gillibrand	Mikulski	Warren
Hagan	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Harkin	Murphy	Wyden

NAYS—36

Alexander	Fischer	Moran
Ayotte	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Hatch	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Scott
Chambliss	Inhofe	Sessions
Coats	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker

NOT VOTING—4

Coburn	Cruz
Cornyn	McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 60, the nays are 36. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2874

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2874.

The amendment (No. 2874) was agreed to.

Mr. REID. For the knowledge of all Members, we are going to have one more vote today and the next vote will be Monday at 5:30 p.m.

I just want to tell everyone, sometimes people get upset at Senator MCCONNELL and me because we don't know what is going on. Well, I hate to admit this, but sometimes he and I don't know what is going on. It is hard to get, sometimes, where we are. So I appreciate that even though Senator MCCONNELL and I have a few little dustups on the floor in front of everybody, whenever we are in private we work well together to try to do the best things for this body.

To get to where we are today wasn't easy, and we should have a good week next week. I know there is a lot of angst on both sides with the things they want to get done, but everyone should be patient. We are trying to work through the process.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the motion to invoke cloture.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on H.R. 3979, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Harry Reid, Jack Reed, Patrick J. Leahy, Thomas R. Carper, Elizabeth Warren, Tammy Baldwin, Edward J. Markey, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Harkin, Cory A. Booker, Tom Udall, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Christopher Murphy, Al Franken, Bernard Sanders.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on H.R. 3979, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirement contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted "nay."

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 61, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 100 Leg.]

YEAS—61

Ayotte	Heinrich	Nelson
Baldwin	Heitkamp	Portman
Begich	Heller	Pryor
Bennet	Hirono	Reed
Blumenthal	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Booker	Kaine	Rockefeller
Boxer	King	Sanders
Brown	Kirk	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Landrieu	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Markey	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	McCaskill	Walsh
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Feinstein	Merkley	Warren
Franken	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden
Hagan	Murphy	
Harkin	Murray	

NAYS—35

Alexander	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Hatch	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Scott
Chambliss	Inhofe	Sessions
Coats	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	

NOT VOTING—4

Coburn	Cruz
Cornyn	McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 61, the nays are 35. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Montana.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 2259

Mr. WALSH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to consideration of Calendar No. 314, H.R. 2259; that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I want to inform the Chair that two of our colleagues have concerns about this legislation—Senators COBURN and CRUZ—and would like to address those concerns with the sponsors. So on their behalf, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Montana.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 255

Mr. WALSH. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 173, S. 255; that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, this is the same legislation, and so for the same reason, on behalf of Senators COBURN and CRUZ, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. WALSH. Madam President, in the far northwestern corner of Montana is one of the most special places on Earth—the North Fork of the Flathead River. The North Fork is a spectacular gravel-bed river that starts in British Columbia and runs along the western half of Glacier National Park before arriving in Flathead Lake.

The North Fork is a world-class trout fishery, with bulltrout and cutthroat trout sharing the same winding waters that grizzly bears rely on for huckleberries. It is the most important wildlife corridor between the Great Plains and the Cascades, and Montanans have always enjoyed rafting, hiking, fishing, and hunting in it.

Today, about 2 million people visit Glacier National Park each year, bringing \$170 million into the local economy and supporting 2,750 jobs.

For 40 years, Montanans have fought to keep the North Fork pristine. My colleague Senator JON TESTER and I are committed to taking this across the finish line.

Four years ago, Montana and British Columbia reached a historic agreement to protect the river on both sides of the border. Two years ago Canada upheld its end of the bargain. Today, the U.S. Congress has the opportunity to do the same. The entire Montana congressional delegation is in bipartisan agreement that the North Fork deserves to be withdrawn permanently from future mineral development. Montanans of all stripes have endorsed this action, including the local chambers of commerce and energy companies such as ConocoPhillips.

In fact, the primary interest in more than 80 percent of existing Federal leases in the watershed have voluntarily been relinquished. Everyone recognizes how important it is to keep the North Fork pristine. It is just the right thing to do.

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee passed the North Fork Watershed Protection Act with no opposition last June. The House passed the North Fork Watershed Protection Act by voice vote last month. This bill is our chance to leave a jewel in the crown of the continent in better shape than we found it.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Montanans in that effort. We can send this bill to the President to sign today.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, will the junior Senator from Montana yield for a question?

Mr. WALSH. I will.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, when my colleague's motion was objected to, the good Senator from Pennsylvania, Senator TOOMEY, said he understood Senators COBURN and CRUZ wished to have further conversation. Has my colleague had a chance to visit with Senators COBURN and CRUZ already about this bill?

Mr. WALSH. Yes, I have.

Mr. TESTER. So that has already been done.

I want to thank my colleague Senator WALSH for attempting to bring up the North Fork Watershed Protection Act for a vote. I also want to echo his frustration that once again politics is trumping good policy.

The North Fork bill is a Montana-made bill. Folks back home who support this bill are from all political sides of the spectrum. It has wide bipartisan support. Members of both parties, as Senator WALSH pointed out, voted it out of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Yet today two Senators—whom I would challenge to find the North Fork on a map—have decided to hold this bill up.

Let me remind them what this bill does. It ensures access along the North Fork for hunters and anglers who contribute to Montana's \$6 billion outdoor economy. If you want to talk about economic development, this is an incredible driver.

The bill also honors a commitment to our neighbor to the north, Canada.

Three years ago British Columbia signed an agreement to retire oil and gas leases on their side of the border, expecting us to protect the region as well. This bill guarantees we hold up our end of the bargain, and it ensures we pass along our outdoor way of life.

I should also point out that Exxon and Conoco both have also given up their leases in this region. Why? Because this drainage feeds Flathead Lake, which is the largest freshwater body of water west of the Mississippi. It is an incredible ecosystem.

I think what has happened today is a loss not only for Montana, not only for America's great outdoors, but for this entire country.

This fight is not over. For far too long in this body we have had people who obstruct just because they can. It is time to start working together and doing what is right, whether we are talking about conservation issues, tax issues, unemployment issues, or whatever it might be. It is time to start moving the country forward because people are suffering out there.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Montana.

Mr. WALSH. Madam President, I am so disappointed my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are blocking the desire of Montanans to protect the North Fork. This bill is a no-brainer. I invite my colleagues to visit Montana and see the North Fork for themselves. Their actions today show why Washington is broken. Despite years of bipartisan hard work, narrow interests can trump responsible leadership.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

GREEN MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT HERITAGE PROTECTION ACT

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I come to the floor this afternoon to request unanimous consent to pass a bill that is a very small step in what will be a very long recovery process for a community in my home State of Washington that was devastated by a landslide less than two weeks ago.

This is the Green Mountain Lookout bill, which will be passed shortly. It is not going to rebuild anybody's home—which needs to be done—or provide desperately needed human aid that we are supporting through our recent Federal disaster designation. What this small, little bill does is provide a glimmer of hope for the long-term recovery of this region, and in particularly of the community of Darrington.

For years now, along with Senator CANTWELL, I have fought to pass this

bill through procedural and political hurdles because I know what it means to Snohomish County and that region of my State. The Green Mountain Lookout is more than a hiking destination. It is part of the Pacific Northwest heritage. It is a cherished historical landmark. It is a place where parents have brought their kids for generations to appreciate the splendor of the great outdoors in the Northwest, and it is a place that has been a vital source of tourism-related income for the people who have been impacted by this deadly landslide that struck this region.

I was in Darrington this weekend and had an opportunity to sit down with the mayor and many of the town officials—a town of about 1200 people—and they told me tremendous stories about the families that have been lost, about people who had driven to the store on that Saturday morning and now only had what they wore when they left their homes a few hours earlier. I heard about the needs this community is going to have for a long time and the emotional impact.

After finishing our official meetings, the mayor took us aside and told me, Senator CANTWELL, and Congresswoman DELBENE that the one glimmer of hope he thought he could provide for this community was passage of this Green Mountain Lookout bill that we are going to pass in just a few moments.

So I want to extend truly heartfelt thanks to both Senator LANDRIEU and Senator MURKOWSKI, who have been incredibly understanding, and to all the Members of the Senate who have been helpful in going through the process of getting the bill to the floor today. They know what it means when communities large or small are impacted by a disaster of this size, and both of them know that the Federal Government needs to be there quickly to provide support.

Madam President, the people of Oso, Arlington, and Darrington have a very long road to recovery ahead, so I was very pleased when the President granted a major disaster declaration just last night which will be vital to meeting many of the immediate human needs that we are going to be facing.

It is important that these communities know we are in it for the long term as well. Even a small step like this one that supports the region's tourist economy and brings that little bit of hope is critical to showing them that all of us and the Federal Government will be there for them. So as they mourn their loved ones and work hard to recover and ultimately rebuild, I am proud that we will not forget them.

With that, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 338, S. 404.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 404) to preserve the Green Mountain Lookout in the Glacier Peak Wilderness