Whereas Abraham Lincoln left Illinois 4 months after being elected President of the United States in 1860;

Whereas Abraham Lincoln was the first member of the Republican party elected President of the United States and helped build the Republican party into a strong national organization;

Whereas, after his election and the secession of the southern States, Abraham Lincoln steered the United States through the most profound moral and political crisis, and the bloodiest war, in the history of the Nation;

Whereas, by helping to preserve the Union and by holding a national election, as scheduled, during a civil war, Abraham Lincoln reaffirmed the commitment of the people of the United States to majority rule and democracy;

Whereas the Emancipation Proclamation signed by Abraham Lincoln declared that slaves within the Confederacy would be forever free and welcomed more than 200,000 African American soldiers and sailors into the armed forces of the Union;

Whereas the Emancipation Proclamation signed by Abraham Lincoln fundamentally transformed the Civil War from a battle for political unity to a moral fight for freedom;

Whereas the faith Abraham Lincoln had in democracy was strong, even after the bloodiest battle of the war at Gettysburg;

Whereas the inspiring words spoken by Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg still resonate today: ''that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth'';

Whereas Abraham Lincoln was powerfully committed to unity, turning rivals into allies within his own Cabinet and welcoming the defeated Confederacy back into the Union with characteristic generosity, ''with malice toward none; with charity for all'';

Whereas Abraham Lincoln became the first President of the United States to be assassinated, days after giving a speech promoting voting rights for African Americans;

Whereas, through his opposition to slavery, Abraham Lincoln set the United States on a path toward resolving the tension between the ideals of ''liberty and justice for all'' espoused by the Founders of the United States and the ignoble practice of slavery, and redefined what it meant to be a citizen of the United States;

Whereas, in his commitment to unity, Abraham Lincoln did more than simply abolish slavery; he ensured that the promise that ''all men are created equal'' was an inheritance to be shared by all people of the United States;

Whereas the story of Abraham Lincoln and the example of his life, including his inspiring rise from humble origins to the highest office of the land and his decisive leadership through the most harrowing time in the history of the United States, continues to bring hope and inspiration to millions in the United States and around the world, making him one of the greatest Presidents and humanitarians in history; and

Whereas February 12, 2009, marks the bicentennial of the birth of Abraham Lincoln: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commemorates the bicentennial of the birth of President Abraham Lincoln;

(2) recognizes and echoes the commitment of Abraham Lincoln to what he called the ''unfinished work'' of unity and harmony in the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to recommit to fulfilling the vision of Abraham Lincoln of equal rights for all.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to make a statement relative to this anniversary of Lincoln's birth, but I would be prepared first to yield to the Republican leader if he wishes to make a statement.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I thank my friend from Illinois. I do have a couple of brief observations.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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

STIMULUS PACKAGE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we have not seen all the details of the deal between House and Senate Democrats, but some of the early reports suggest this bill has only gotten worse. The President has asked for 40 percent in tax cuts; this bill falls short of that. But Congressional Democrats did make sure it contains billions in questionable, nonstimulative projects and the most highly touted tax cut in the original proposal now translates to $7.70 a week for middle-class workers.

This bill was meant to be a stimulus that was timely, targeted, and temporary. Unfortunately, it appears to be none of the above. Democrats in Congress have said this plan will help ensure long-term economic growth. Yet the CBO suggests that over the long term, this bill will result in an economy that either declines or remains flat. The only thing we know for sure about this bill is it will lead to more debt for our children—and that is just the beginning. This week, Congressional Democrats are handing the taxpayers a bill for $1.2 trillion. Soon they will spend $400 billion to finish spending from last year. We are being told to get ready for untold hundreds of billions for the financial industry.

Since taking over Congress and the White House, Democrats have been making up for lost time with a Government spending spree on the taxpayers' credit card. Even without this massive spending bill, the deficit continues to grow. Yesterday, Treasury reported that the first 4 months of the fiscal year, the deficit rose to $569 billion. That is nearly $500 billion more than the same period last year.

Let me repeat that. According to Treasury, we ran a deficit in the first quarter of this fiscal year that is nearly $500 billion more than the same period last year. You do not have to be Suze Orman to know this is not sustainable.

I know everyone involved believes their efforts will help strengthen the economy and create jobs. No one should doubt that everyone is trying to do the right thing. My concern is not with the motivation behind these efforts but the wisdom of these efforts. Everyone wants to help Americans get back on their feet, but we need to do it smartly. In my view and in the view of my Republican colleagues, this is not a smart approach. The taxpayers of today and tomorrow will be left to clean up the mess.

LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, later today Members of Congress will join President Obama and the Lincoln Bicentennial Commission to honor the bicentennial of President Lincoln's birth. My good friend Senator BUNNING has my gratitude for his work on the Commission.

The people of my State are rightly proud of the fact that Abraham Lincoln was born 3 miles south of Hodgenville, KY. And there are events across our State and others honoring this great man. And the ceremony later today will be an opportunity for us all to remember his life and service.

NAACP CENTENNIAL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the NAACP on this, its 100th anniversary.

One hundred years ago, 60 men and women answered a call to promote social equality in this country. This effort brought together a diverse group of prominent Americans, including Kentucky native William English Walling, who signed a manifesto forming the NAACP. They chose February 12 as their founding date to honor the birth of Abraham Lincoln.

Since then, the NAACP has recognized the contributions of Americans who have made strides in eliminating prejudice.

This year, the NAACP will honor Kentucky native Muhammad Ali for a lifetime of contributions. When I was growing up in Louisville, I went to DuPont Manual High School. A young man who was then named Cassius Clay was in the same grade at Central High School. He was the most well known teenager in town by far. We all knew him as the local Golden Gloves champ.

His spirit of hard work and efforts to improve his community are being rightly honored by the NAACP this year, and Kentucky is proud that one of its own is being honored this week.

So to all at the NAACP, congratulations on this centennial. It is an opportunity to reflect on the efforts and accomplishments of those who worked so hard over the past century to advance your founding goals.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The assistant majority leader is recognized.

STIMULUS PACKAGE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, before I make some remarks about the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth, I wish to respond to the Republican leader's comments about the ongoing negotiations that have been inspired by