

Sandy, but we still have created about 100,000 new jobs. Private sector job growth has been significant. We are approaching—let's see, it must be about 4 million jobs now that have been created. That doesn't nearly make up for what was lost during the Bush years, but we are making progress.

People in America realize we can no longer have the top-down economy the Republicans so loved during the Bush years and what they wanted to create again with Governor Romney.

I would be happy to take a look at the proposal my friend the Republican leader has shown us if we could come up with something like we did when they created this other furor by refusing to increase the debt, where we had an ability to come here and have a couple of votes to determine if we were going to increase it. If that is what they want to do again, I would be happy to seriously take a look at that and report to the White House and my caucus, but until then I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The minority leader.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, my friend indicates that there is some confusion about who the quarterback is on the Republican side. Of course, that is quite common when you don't have a White House. But there is no doubt about who the quarterback is on the Democratic side. The quarterback on the Democratic side is the President of the United States. Unfortunately, he keeps throwing interceptions, and we are moving backward and backward and backward away from the goal line. We have \$4 trillion in annual deficits, and my friend from Nevada still wants to blame that on George Bush? And now the President is asking for unlimited—unlimited—authority to borrow whenever he wants to for whatever amount he wants? If the majority leader supports that proposal, I would hope we could work together and get a vote on it to give his Members a chance to express themselves as to whether they think that is a good way forward for our country—to give this President or any other President unlimited authority to borrow as much as he wants at any time he wants from the Chinese or anybody else. That is the question.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, of course, as I said, I will be happy to look at the proposal by my friend, but the President doesn't want to do anything other than what we have done before, and that is where we are now, and that is why I would be happy to take a look at his proposal, because if it is what we did last summer, I would be happy to take a look at that and move forward.

Mr. President, it is not only we Democrats, but we have a long line of Republicans who, as I outlined early on, are recognizing that we need to immediately make sure the middle class and the poor are taken care of without their taxes being increased. We have Representatives COLE, SCOTT; David Brooks, a columnist from the New

York Times; Senators SNOWE, COLLINS, and COBURN; and a long list of Republicans saying let's move on.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11:45 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. reserved for speeches by retiring Senators.

The Senator from Colorado.

EXTENDING TAX CUTS

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I would like to associate myself with the majority leader's remarks. We do need to extend the tax cuts for the middle class as soon as possible. That is clearly the message the American people sent on November 6 in the nationwide election we held.

I also wish to respond to the comments and the conversation between the two leaders over the debt ceiling limit. It is important to recognize that when we raise the debt ceiling, all we are doing is keeping faith with what Congress has already appropriated, what Congress has already made clear we would spend on behalf of our country in all the various ways the Federal Government operates. We cannot afford to have a situation such as we had August before last where we dallied and literally shot our economy and ourselves in the foot by not extending the debt ceiling. We saw the rating agencies lower our national rating for the first time in history. There is a way to do this, to have a mechanism in place so we never again get in a situation where the debt ceiling becomes a point of contention and literally hurts our economy.

So, again, I want to say that the majority leader is on track. Let's extend these middle-class tax cuts right now and bring some certainty and help our economy grow. The majority leader is on point when he shared the numbers. I think we have seen about 5 million jobs created after approaching literally the great recession when President Obama first took office. So let's get that job done.

WIND PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I have come to the floor this morning, as I have for many mornings, to talk about the wind energy industry and the importance of tax credits. And this is another job I want to see us get done as soon as possible—to extend the wind production tax credit. It expires in less than a month.

This tax credit has been vital for job creation and for our American manufacturing. Literally, the PTC—the production tax credit—has encouraged the creation of tens of thousands of good-paying middle-class jobs, and it has led to millions in capital investment in States such as Colorado. In fact, 48 States have a wind energy industry presence. Along with the capital investments, what we have seen is the development of thousands of megawatts of clean renewable wind power. And if we let this PTC expire, the stakes are very high.

I have come to the floor 24 times to speak to the importance of the PTC and the benefits it provides for families and businesses in every State across the Nation. I am here because the wind PTC is a critical investment in and a downpayment toward a clean energy future—a future at risk if we don't act and act soon. It is not too late to act. It truly isn't. And to give us more motivation, to point out what is at risk, I wish to focus today on the State of Minnesota and direct my remarks to their wind energy industry.

Minnesota, as we know, is the Land of 10,000 Lakes. Although Minnesota's namesake may be its water, it has become a leader in the wind energy industry and a compelling example of the positive effects the PTC can have in a State. Let me share some numbers to make the point.

As of 2011, Minnesota ranks fifth nationally for the most installed wind capacity, with over 2,700 megawatts, and it trails only Illinois, Iowa, California, and Texas. You can see all the blue areas on the map. Those are areas in which there is installed wind operations. In fact, wind energy meets 12.7—I will round that up to 13 percent of the State's energy needs. This ranks fourth among all States. That means they are powering through the wind energy industry the equivalent of 770,000 Minnesota homes, and that number is going up. It is growing.

We know through our two colleagues from Minnesota that Minnesotans take pride in everything having to do with Minnesota, and well they should. And they are taking pride in being in the forefront of wind power growth. Since 2003 Minnesotans have purchased 1 billion kilowatt hours of energy through Windsource, which is Minnesota's voluntary green power program. It means over 20,000 residents and about 240 businesses pay a little extra on their electric bill to support wind energy and show their commitment to a clean energy economy. I know this works because we have a similar program in Colorado. Excel also has a presence in Colorado, and they offer Windsource to Coloradans.

Now, Minnesota's prominence as a wind power State has been aided by the fact that it also has a successful wind manufacturing industry, and those manufacturing facilities in Minnesota have created hundreds of good-paying jobs and new investments. Federal incentives, including the PTC, have