

from the Pentagon. Eight pilots and 25 flight attendants were sacrificed for the terrorists' causes, and were struck down while doing their job, not to mention the 80 police officers and the 329 firefighters who also lost their lives.

It is impossible to imagine an event with greater capacity to compel America to unite in action, to unite and to take action. No citizen was untouched. No citizen across the United States or the world was untouched. Working people around the country all wanted to know what they could do to help. They continue to ask, "How can we help our Nation?" Firemen and women, police officers, medical crews, labored around the clock in dangerous and dramatic conditions. No doubt that their work was straining and heartbreaking, but they did it. Why? Because they believed in helping America.

We, too, as Members of Congress must do all that we can. I state, we, too, as Members of Congress, must do all that we can. We must work for the American people. We must commemorate their hard work and the sacrifices. We must never forget that for some of those, it was the ultimate sacrifice.

We must provide relief, and I state, we must provide relief related to the workers: the flight attendants, the pilots, the ground crew, security workers, as well as workers in the hospitality industry. We must do what is right for America. We must help working families. We must support this legislation. We must come together. We must bring it to the floor.

Only together in solidarity in working can we bring our Nation back to its strength. We must all come together.

□ 1915

RELIEF FOR DISPLACED WORKERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMONS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge quick action to address a crisis in our country. The number of workers displaced from the airlines and related industries since the devastating terrorist attacks of September 11 have been steadily growing and now stretches beyond 100,000.

Our air infrastructure is, in many ways, the backbone of our economy; and its strength is essential to the economic health of the United States. The September 11 tragedy and subsequent shutdown of the airways had a severe financial impact on carriers and led to massive layoffs. In response, this House passed, with my support, a \$15 billion package of cash assistance and loan guarantees to help the airlines weather this recent storm.

It continues to be my strong hope that by promoting the continued viability of air travel this aid will also help other businesses relying upon the airline industry, businesses like air-

craft manufacturers, travel agents, rental car agencies, hotels and restaurants, all of which have been affected by the recent shutdown in air travel.

Unfortunately, the airline assistance package is unlikely to help the thousands of workers who have lost their jobs in recent weeks, and we must not turn our backs on them in this critical time. If we truly hope to boost our Nation's economy, we must ensure that these men and women receive unemployment benefits, health care, and the training needed to minimize the transition time between jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of legislation which will give these workers a helping hand at a time when it is desperately needed. These measures introduced by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART) would allow displaced airline industry employees to petition the Department of Labor for special benefits akin to those provided under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program.

Specifically, eligible employees would receive unemployment benefits for 78 weeks instead of the usual 26, and even those who would not otherwise qualify for unemployment would be entitled to 26 weeks of benefits.

In addition, laid-off workers would receive up to 78 weeks of job-training assistance to ensure they could reenter the workforce as quickly as possible.

Finally, displaced workers would be provided up to 18 months of federally subsidized COBRA premiums, and those workers without COBRA would receive temporary Medicaid coverage.

Just as importantly, the assistance would be available to all airline and airport workers, including transit workers, as well as employees of airline suppliers, such as service workers and airplane manufacturers.

Mr. Speaker, we took an important first step by providing financial assistance to stabilize the airlines, restore confidence in air travel, and protect the millions of workers still employed in the airline industry. However, our work cannot end there. We must act quickly on behalf of the workers and their families who have been impacted by widespread layoffs. They desperately need our help to pay bills, buy groceries, maintain access to health care, and learn the skills they need to quickly find new employment.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in telling these hardworking Americans that we have heard their plea and they can count on us to respond.

AIRLINE WORKER RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 60

minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I can pretty much assure the Speaker that I will not take the whole hour, but the gravity of why I am here allows that time is of no moment.

Time stood still on September 11 for this country and the world. Indeed, time ended for the countless victims that we know so well now lost their lives and many are still missing. Time stood still for the families of those victims and continues to stand still.

When that kind of tragedy occurs, in spite of our hope that we will get back to normal, the reality is that we will be normal; but it will be a different kind of normal, and those persons that were lost, Americans and persons from other parts of the world, will have their memories best served if those of us that have the immense responsibility of assisting in getting to the different normal were to take our time and make sure that we do everything that we possibly can to protect the interests of those victims, their families and the various workers and the industries and entrepreneurs that make this great structure of ours function.

Toward that end, last week I filed a bill that I come to the floor to speak about tonight, the Displaced Workers Relief Act, which is H.R. 2946; and in addition thereto, the minority leader and myself filed yet another measure that deals with virtually the same subject, but expands the definition of eligible employees.

I am proud to report to America this evening that 100 Members of the United States House of Representatives have signed on in that short period of time to the bill that was filed by my Republican colleague, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART), and myself as the initial movers of 2946. Among that 100, are 10 other Republicans. And, hopefully, in time, more will see the wisdom of this particular measure or will come forward with measures of their own so that we will not be standing still while the lives of others are lost.

There are so many creative notions as to what ought be done, and this is minuscule by comparison to some that have been introduced on either side of the aisle. In the other body, Senator JEAN CARNAHAN filed the legislation that our minority leader, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) and myself and other cosponsors filed.

It is not that all of us do not understand the seriousness of where we are in this country, but there is such a great need for us not to obfuscate, for us not to be about the business of trying to one-up each other, of our being prepared to sit down. I am fond of saying that we probably should be locked up here in the Capitol, all 540 of us that represent the people of this great country, until such time as we have come up with appropriate legislative answers that will address our needs and the needs of our constituents.

In the past 2 weeks, Mr. Speaker, more than 100,000 airline employees have been laid off as a result of the terrorist attacks on September 11. In the coming days, weeks, and months, it is almost certain that the number of layoffs in the airline industry alone, as well as the industries directly affected and indirectly affected by airline travel, will affect all of us as far as the change that comes; will affect us all and the effects of same will be drastic increases in unemployment.

The residual from this tragedy is beyond anything any of us ever comprehended would happen in our homeland. And it has not only devastated one portion of our industry that we rushed, correctly, to assist, the airline industry, the linchpin, the literal vertebra of this country insofar as our commercial activity is concerned, we correctly addressed that. But at that time, we left out the airline workers; and we left out the collateral. And now we say we are going to come back to that.

I want to make it very clear that while I am advocating this evening in this legislation for airline workers, I really am advocating for all of America and all of America's workers. When the National Airport is not open, it does not just affect United States Congress persons, it affects 16 million people that travel through that airport, and it affects everybody from the salesperson of the magazines and newspapers that we purchase to the sky captains, to the mechanics, to the restaurant workers. All of us are affected when this kind of tragedy occurs.

Aviation experts as well as the Government Accounting Office note that the airline industry has a high multiplier effect. It is thought by some that for every 100 jobs created by the airline industry an additional 250 jobs are created by those industries who service the airlines. In turn, as many as 250,000 workers may have already lost or will soon be on the brink of losing their jobs.

I was standing on the floor speaking with both the representatives from Hawaii, and I am sure the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) will not mind my telling this story about the loss that is occurring not only in Hawaii, but in my home State of Florida, in California, and all over this Nation. The City of Washington, D.C. has under 50 percent registration in its hotels. But the gentlewoman from Hawaii was telling me that she and her family were planning a celebration, a family reunion. And what transpired when she went to a meeting where they were organizing the effort, they learned that the hotel that they were scheduled to hold their family reunion in is closing.

I can tell my colleagues that that is going to happen in an awful lot of places. The vignettes, Mr. Speaker, the anecdotes that we all have picked up on on both sides of the aisle from our colleagues are ad infinitum with reference to the losses that are occurring.

I went to the Miami International Airport yesterday. I had received a letter from the Miami-Dade Mayor, Alex Penelas, as well as my county commissioners in Broward and Palm Beach County that have come here to discuss, among other things, the losses that are the derivative in all of this. Yesterday, I saw two people that were leaving the airport, having been alerted that their jobs were no longer needed, one woman, a Latino lady, with tears in her eyes. Now, we have a responsibility to do something about that; and I, quite frankly, believe that we will and that we can.

One of the things that Minority Leader GEPHARDT or Senator CARNAHAN's bill, and I cannot continue to talk about this bill without continuing to mention my colleague, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART), but what we forgot was something that a lot of us forget, that is definitional with reference to legislation. We forgot to include Guam and American Samoa and the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia in our definition. So I will be amending my legislation to reflect that. And I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD), for bringing that to my attention.

Very occasionally we file legislation not mindful that Americans in our territories also need to be contemplated. What would have happened had my legislation fortunately passed is that Guam would not have been eligible for any of the consideration that I had offered.

□ 1930

That must be corrected. Those kinds of little things are why we need to share, why we do need to make sure that we are talking with each other.

The Mayor of Dade County wrote me about the airline and aviation industry, that it is the county's primary economic engine, consisting in that county alone of more than 90,000 workers and representing more than 9 percent of the county's total workforce. The loss of jobs and income in Miami Dade and in Broward, that is Ft. Lauderdale, my major city that I am fortunate and privileged to represent, and in Palm Beach County, the multiplier is something in the neighborhood of 160,000 workers at airports alone. Without them there is no doubt that Florida's economy is going to be hindered for years to come.

If Florida's economy, just like the District of Columbia's economy, is hindered, then all of America's economy is hindered.

I am fond of teasing my friends who act parochially all the time by telling them if the sparrow falls, it will not necessarily fall in their district. I mean no offense when I say that, but this is not a district thing. It is an American thing. It is an international thing. We live in a global village, and we are fortunate that God has given us

the privileges that we have in this country. To preserve them, this Congress, this institution, has the responsibility of passing not just this legislation but companion legislation that will address all of our needs.

A lot of times we do not take into consideration the human dimension when tragedy occurs. I want us to be sure that, while we did what I perceive to be the right thing in protecting airplanes, that we do what is the right thing in protecting people.

When we introduced this legislation, among the things that the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART) and I hoped would happen is that we would extend unemployment benefits from 26 to 78 weeks. This is the same amount provided to workers under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program.

We hope and we believe that it would be helpful to provide 26 weeks of unemployment insurance benefits for workers who would not otherwise qualify. The gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART) and I feel and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the minority leader, and Senator CARNAHAN feel that to extend job-training benefits from 15 to 78 weeks, this is the same amount provided under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program, and it is the right thing to do for America.

We would want to provide up to 78 weeks of federally subsidized Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 premiums, COBRA it is referred to in the vernacular here. We will provide up to 72 weeks of optional Medicaid coverage to workers who are not covered under COBRA, and they are too numerous to mention.

Under either bill, all airline and airplane workers, including transit workers as well as employees who work for airline suppliers, such as service employees and plane manufacturers, like the upwards of 30,000 people in the State of Washington in the Boeing manufacturing part of the airline industry, not to mention the other places where parts are made, those persons too will be eligible to receive these benefits. The two bills are cost-effective ways to assist workers and their families as they deal with these hard times and at the same time, help stimulate our faltering economy.

Working families will not be saving this meager assistance that we are trying to provide them. On the contrary, they will be putting it back into the economy at a time it desperately needs it. Everywhere I look in this country industries and businesses are hurting. Hotels are reporting record lows in occupancy levels.

I am a native Floridian. For the very first time in Florida, Florida's hotels are occupied at a single digit level. Need I remind people of Las Vegas and Mississippi and California and Hawaii and other places, not to mention just New York and the places where the tragedy impacted severely, physically. The residual is that we are losing.

I filed another measure to assist in protecting travel agencies who were losing customers by the dozens, and their number of unemployed within the next 2 weeks is expected to be 8,500.

The cruise industry that borders my shores, including the day cruise industry, those persons that provide some luxury, and I will be filing another measure that will now address the American family and the American middle class who misses out so often when we do things here in the House of Representatives, and that measure that will be introduced before the end of the day tomorrow or at the earlier portion of the next day, that will be co-sponsored by the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR) and the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) and the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE), will give the hotel industry and the travel industry a shot in the arm if we would allow tax deductions for families when they take their vacations in the places that we need to get back to normal.

Service industries dependent upon airlines are closing their doors as we speak. One person said to me that in the Fiji Islands, people got off of the airplane and were ready to go on their cruise. They were debarked from the cruise line because the tour operators at the rest of their destinations, which included the territories, had gone bankrupt.

We need to fly planes but protect people. Both of the bills that we are using as vehicles here in Congress can use all of my colleagues to address the human dimension in national tragedy we all know affects us all.

Mr. Speaker, let us look at another country which is accustomed to terrorism and how they handled their situation.

Yesterday morning, USA Today ran an editorial arguing that Congress should not be helping out hurting industries and unemployed workers in this time of need. The paper claimed that Federal assistance to these faltering industries is unnecessary and fails to truly stimulate the economy. Fortunately, USA Today was fair, and I had the opportunity to respond to what I perceive to be a misleading and incorrect editorial.

Mr. Speaker, I take tonight as an opportunity to ask USA Today to consider again the response that I offered and to allow for other Members of Congress to display their views, which I am sure they are willing to do.

In preparing the response, I was curious as to how other countries dealt with acts of terrorism and the result of these cowardly acts. As many of us would have done, I sought a visual, a country which has dealt with terrorism for more than 50 years. Interestingly enough, in responding to decreasing profits in many industries and increasing unemployment as a result of continuing terrorist attacks in Israel, the Israeli Government has responded in a similar manner to how we are responding here in the United States.

Just in the last week and a half, the Israeli Government provided the hotel industry with emergency funds to offset their single digit occupancy levels. The Israeli cabinet has approved emergency measures to fight unemployment that has come as a result of the increasing amounts of terrorism within Israel's borders. It is time for Congress to follow that kind of lead and not allow any unemployed worker to go on living without help.

Mr. Speaker, I have been joined by several of my colleagues, and I yield to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON).

Ms. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, when we come in on a daily basis, we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in support of the Displaced Workers Assistance Act, and any other measure that is pending before this Congress; and I am here to enlist the eyes, ears and hearts for support for the Displaced Workers Act and any other measure that may be out there.

Mr. Speaker, how would my colleagues, Members of the United States Congress, feel if we appropriated billions of dollars to this institution, and show up the next day once that measure had been enacted, only to find that we are no longer employed, that our employment has been abruptly terminated without notice, that we are no longer receiving a paycheck or severance pay or insurance or benefits.

That is why I believe that any delay in assisting those workers who were dramatically affected by the September 11 incident would be a delay in justice and thus a denial of justice to the numerous people who were affected by the horrendous and tragic September 11 event.

In 1900, Mr. Speaker, when Wilbur Wright designed this remarkable instrument that would eventually annihilate space and circumscribe time, the Wright brothers' idea some 98 years later, sought and obtained billions of dollars in bail-out funds from this Congress.

We preserve the Wright brothers' marvelous invention. Now with equal haste it is imperative, I believe, that we treat our brothers and sisters right.

So I rise tonight, Mr. Speaker, to suggest that we have fewer people flying, and with fewer people flying we have fewer planes in the air. With fewer planes in the air, we need fewer people to fly and man and maintain these airplanes.

I have heard heartbreaking examples all over the place about people who suddenly and abruptly lost their jobs. I have a lady in my district who had been employed by the airlines for some 38 years. Her daughter and her husband met a very tragic accident and lost their lives; and she is trying to maintain the family, and they left behind

some five children, school-aged children. Suddenly she became unemployed. She has no benefits and has yet to get any kind of support to support the children whose mother and father died prematurely.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Black Caucus this weekend had an event at the Grand Hyatt; and I heard the sorry, sad stories of the employees there and wanted to applaud the Congressional Black Caucus for going ahead with the event. I am glad we did not suspend it because the hotel held a few employees over to handle the event, and they lost their jobs at the end of the Congressional Black Caucus weekend. These were maids. They were service workers, they were counter agents, and just an abundance of workers lost their jobs.

I understand at Washington National the figure goes all over the place, some 10,000 people. I had a lady call me because she would see me coming in and out of the airport from Indianapolis on a weekly basis, and shared with me the sad situation she faces, a disabled husband hurt on his job, and they are living off a meager worker's compensation check that will expire in the next 2 or 3 weeks.

While I understand the rationale in part for assisting the airline industry, we cannot wait any longer to assist the employees, the sky caps that were on the curb, the baggage handlers, the cargo handlers, the ticket agents, all of these people who have been affected by that tragic situation on September 11.

□ 1945

We helped out the airline industry. Let us help out the people who are we the people of the United States who are in dire need.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the honorable gentleman from Florida for allowing me to speak on behalf of this measure and to applaud him for having the foresight and the insight to try to help all of those who have been so severely affected.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE). I mentioned earlier the losses. I am sure that the gentleman from Washington will be able to bring us current. I am sure that my statistics do not reflect all of the collateral damage that has been done in his great State.

Mr. INSLEE. I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), I thank the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART) and Minority Leader GEPHARDT for their leadership in bringing this to the attention of the House. I and about 100 other Members were in New York City to see the devastation. The personal loss of life there is so stunning it defies description, but I think it is the responsibility of this House to very promptly deal with the loss of income, the loss of living ability of many other families across the country that have been caused by this terrorist act.

In my neck of the woods, I represent the area north of Seattle. We have 20 to 30,000 workers at Boeing that may have layoffs hit them in the next year as a result of the decline in airline usage in the next year or so. There are 20 to 30,000 families as a direct result of this terrorist act that are looking at a loss of health care benefits, potentially a change in their career and a real problem paying the grocery bill. It seems to me very important for our Chamber this week to pass a measure that will give assurance to those families that they will not be left out in the lurch when we deal with this terrorist act.

There are a couple of reasons for that, I think. One, we have got to realize that while we have responded to the immediate corporate needs of the corporations that run our airlines, and I think that was an appropriate and necessary thing to keep this infrastructure going in our country, it is impossible for me to go home and explain to my families at Boeing who have been directly laid off as a result of these terrorist acts why the U.S. House would deal with the needs of the corporations, legitimate as they are, and not deal with the personal needs of the workers who have been damaged as well.

They have needs to pay the grocery bill and their rent that are every bit as much pressing as the needs to keep those lines of credit going for the airlines. We hope that the House will send a strong message this week when we pass the airline safety bill that we are going to deal with airline workers as well. It just is not right to sort of shuffle off individual family members' needs to the back of our legislative calendar. That just is not right. We need to deal with that at the same time.

I want to applaud Speaker DENNY HASTERT of our Chamber who has helped us find unity in dealing with this challenge in the last several weeks. We hope that he will be successful in forging a bipartisan consensus on how to deal with these laid-off families' needs as well as the corporate needs that we did.

The second reason I think this is necessary is this is part of our counterterrorism effort. Our conflict involves our military and our intelligence forces, but it also involves depriving the terrorists of what they want, which is a disruption, instilling fear in the American people. To the extent that the American government provides a safety net, provides security to families, we defeat the terrorists. This is a counterterrorism effort when you tell the terrorists they are not going to succeed in putting 130,000 families out on the street, away from their homes, with an inability to deal with their financial crisis. This is a way of beating the terrorists in their efforts to strike fear in our heartland.

And, third, we are going to have to talk about a stimulus package. I think it is appropriate that we deal with this on a global basis or a national basis, but if we are going to stimulate any-

thing, we need to stimulate the ability of these people who are laid off, these 130,000 families in the next several months, let us make sure they can stay afloat to send a message of confidence to the American people.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hope that we will all be successful this week, not next week, not next month, not at the end of the legislative calendar, but in our next round of discussions to help these families. I, again, thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) for his leadership.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) very much.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Florida and member of the Committee on Rules. It is very important to note how early he recognized this issue and how quickly he moved with legislation, in fact, the week of this tragic and terrible incident, in addition to the need for stabilization of airlines, along with the mourning for the enormous loss of life, to begin to put in place a structure that will respond to the numbers of individuals, again I want to emphasize, working people who are being impacted by this heinous act.

We all know what terrorism is all about. Tomorrow, the Committee on the Judiciary marks up the antiterrorism bill. We have used that word more often now than we have ever used it probably in our lifetime. Terrorism is fear, intimidation. It wants you to turn on your fellow neighbor. It wants you to be fearful. It wants you to feel crushed. There is nothing more crushing than a hardworking individual, Americans who believe so much in the work ethic, self-supporting, believing in their employer, being laid off with no potential opportunity for employment.

And so I was certainly one who supported the stabilizing of the airports and providing the resources and support for the airlines. But equally important is recognizing that these are families that now are without income. We must move on this legislation, the legislation filed by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), premised on the legislation that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) filed earlier, the legislation filed in the Senate by Senator CARNAHAN is clearly legislation that I wish was moving this week, because even as we see the return of individuals to our airlines and flying and all of us have said, please, we are working, it is safe, we believe that we have the responsibility to ensure safety, and we are committed to doing so along with the airline industry, and, of course, our airport system. We want Americans and others to fly. But at the same time we know it will be a transitional period, and there are people who are being laid off now who will be off

for a period of time until this whole idea of flying is restored. But as those individuals are laid off, then we know that the hotel workers, small businesses with employees and others that tie into the industry, travel agents, tourism, we hear the call to come back to Las Vegas and we know how much you can lose or gain in Las Vegas, but it is part of the economy, the call to come back to Disney World and Disneyland, to go visit our national parks and our wonderful capital of the United States of America. We heard a great announcement today that Reagan National is going to open, so we know changes will come about, but this legislation is so key.

As I entered the airport today, sky caps were saying thank you, because we restored privileges to have curbside check-in. Changes are being made, but it is still important to have legislation that extends the unemployment assistance and provides job training because we do not know where this will lead us.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleague and I want to thank him for this special order and allowing me to proceed because of the time element. But I am very much concerned that we do not move this legislation quick enough. I want to note my appreciation to the Leader and as well the Speaker. I believe that the two of them can help us move this legislation quickly. I hope that maybe, I assume we want it marked up, I do not know the procedures, I would almost like a suspension bill, but if it has to go through committee, I would ask those committees to mark this up quickly. I would like to see this on the floor, as I said, this week, but certainly next week because there is nothing like supporting the flag of the United States with our arms around the American worker who makes the engine of this economy move.

They are falling on hard times now. This legislation is not a handout, it is a hand up. Each of us in our respective districts know these families. We go to church with these families. We have got to help them.

I ask the airlines as I close, each of them would do well, and I would welcome it if they would send us a letter of support indicating their commitment as well to these workers and those who are impacted tangentially through the industry. We are all one big family. For the airlines to stabilize, I wish them well, and I will be working with them as hard as I can.

I see my colleague from Texas. We represent Continental Airlines in our community. We want them to survive. Let us work with the American worker as well. I thank the gentleman for his kindness.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank the gentlewoman. I make note of the fact that when we prepared the legislation, the gentlewoman was the second person to speak with me about being an original cosponsor.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my distinguished colleague and good friend from Houston, Texas (Mr. GREEN).

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues tonight in support of our Nation's working men and women who have been laid off as a result of the terrorist attacks. I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) for spearheading not only this legislation, but also tonight's special order.

Just over a week ago, we gathered in the House and passed bipartisan legislation designed to take care of the critical needs of one of the most visible victims of the economic effects of these attacks, our national air transportation system. Due to the restrictions placed on air carriers in the aftermath of this tragedy as well as the understandable reluctance of Americans to resume flying, Congress passed the Air Transportation System Stabilization Act which provides critically needed economic assistance to our airlines. I believe that that bill was a necessary and responsible action to these attacks. I was hoping we could do it even the week of the tragedy, but it ended up the next week. I support other measures that will provide additional aid to additional industries that have been similarly impacted.

However, in our rush to help out these companies across America, we must not forget the working Americans who are losing their jobs because of these attacks. Even with the aid that Congress provided, layoffs at the airlines since September 11 have passed the 100,000 mark. For example, Continental Airlines, our hometown airlines in Houston, the largest employer in my hometown of Houston, has announced that they are laying off as many as 12,000 workers systemwide, 3,000 of them locally in Houston. These layoffs, combined with a decrease of close to 100 flights a day into Continental's hub at Intercontinental Airport, will have a substantial impact that will be felt throughout our local economy.

That is just the tip of the iceberg. It is still possible that additional layoffs could happen in the airline industry. Further, other transportation-related businesses, such as restaurants, hotels and car rental agencies have all begun laying off significant portions of their workforce. That is why I feel that the Displaced Workers Relief Act is so crucial.

This legislation will provide needed relief to hardworking Americans and families as they deal with this difficult time. At the same time, this relief will serve as a stimulus for our economy. The bill would extend unemployment and job training from 26 weeks to 78 weeks for these workers. This is the same amount provided to workers under the trade adjustment assistance program. For workers not otherwise qualified for unemployment insurance benefits, the bill would provide 26 weeks of unemployment insurance. More importantly, it would provide up

to 78 weeks of federally-subsidized COBRA premiums and provide optional temporary Medicaid coverage for these workers without COBRA. COBRA is the part where if you are laid off, you can continue to buy your insurance from your group insurance, your employer. The problem is oftentimes that it is so expensive, you are laid off, you do not have any income, you cannot even afford the insurance. That is why we need to pass this legislation as a package. Hopefully the airline security is immediately adjacent to it so we can do it. All airline and airport workers, including transit workers as well as employees who work for airline suppliers, such as service employees and plane manufacturers, will be eligible for these benefits.

That is why I urge the House quickly to do that. Mr. Speaker, I am proud that Continental Airlines was one of the airlines that said that they would not abrogate their union contracts, they would pay their employees under their union contract and not have the emergency provisions in their contracts. I am proud that they are our hometown airline and they are treating their employees well. Other airlines were not.

□ 2000

That is why today I was disappointed when I heard that Reagan was reopening and that Continental was not getting some of the slots based on being the fifth largest airline. We are working on that as a delegation from Houston.

I thank the gentleman for this bill. Hopefully there are a lot of things we can do, and this is one of the things we need to do for our employees.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I have a very strong feeling that American Airlines should have some of those slots, if we are going to open it, safely, for all of the airlines to be able to undertake to do their responsibilities as well.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes bipartisanship takes on characteristics where even on one side of the aisle there may be divisions on issues. Tomorrow, if America is looking, my good friend, and he is my good friend, the gentleman from Chicago, Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), is going to be opposing a measure that I support. So if they want to see Democrats in a cat fight, wait until tomorrow when the gentleman and I go at it. But tonight, for America, the gentleman and I stand totally together. We will have our dispute about the sugar industry and the confectionery industry on tomorrow. I do not want to take too much of the time, since I control it.

I now yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Displaced Workers Relief Act of 2001 as proposed by my colleagues, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentlewoman

from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART). I want to commend both these Members, because, once again, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) is out front dealing seriously with the needs of working class Americans, making sure that there is balance in our decisions, so that everybody gets a piece of the action.

This bill will provide much-needed relief and assistance to families that are affected as the airline industry is facing a very tough challenge in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11. Analysts had already projected an overall loss of about \$3 billion in 2001, the worst performing year since 1992. With the terrorist attacks on our shores, those losses will very likely escalate. Even though most airports are back in operation, yet the airlines are flying with less than 75 percent of their capacity. In other words, layoffs, the high level of unemployment, are directly affecting employees of the airlines and associated industries.

We have just entered the fall season, meaning that children are back in school, mortgages have to be paid, and life must continue. To minimize anticipated hardships affecting hardworking families of our respective districts, I support wholeheartedly H.R. 2946, known as the Displaced Workers Relief Act of 2001, and once again commend and congratulate the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART) for taking to heart the needs of American workers.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I was about to commit a major mistake. The previous speaker pro tempore, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS), is a cosponsor of this measure as well, and, in light of the fact that he was in the Chair, I was not ignoring that. I want to acknowledge and thank the gentleman, not only for his support, but for his demonstrated leadership here in the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON), a champion of working and rural Americans, who clearly understands that this tragedy has impacted us all and has impacted North Carolina's industry, its hotel industry, its tourism, and its rural communities.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and thank him for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, Congress passed within 10 days of the terrorist attack a bailout package for our airline industry, which they indeed needed. Now, about 10 days later, we have an opportunity to pass a bill, H.R. 2946, to provide relief for displaced workers. We must support America's workers.

I again want to congratulate the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART) for their collective leadership, and all of those who are cosponsors. I am pleased to say I am also a cosponsor of this bill.

In addition to the hardships suffered by airlines during this crisis, thousands, indeed, hundreds of thousands, of airline and airport workers have lost their jobs or may lose their jobs and need help from the Federal Government.

We also should find ways to help the millions of workers in hotel and travel industry jobs who also may become unemployed during this crisis.

I would like to place into the RECORD a statement by Mr. John Wilhelm, President of the Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees International Union.

STATEMENT BY JOHN W. WILHELM, PRESIDENT

The devastation of the hospitality industry nationwide cannot be overstated. Between one-third and one-half of our Union's members will be laid off this week, and the same proportions are true for the larger non-Union sector of our industry, resulting in at least three million workers laid off.

Our Union supports temporary relief for the companies in our history. In addition, we believe temporary relief for the employees is essential, not only for the sake of the workers and their families, but for the sake of our nation. The hospitality industry has driven the recovery of central cities over the last decade. We are the largest welfare-to-work employer. The collapse of our industry has dire implications.

Supplemental Federal unemployment insurance is important, and has considerable precedent. It may also prove necessary, in New York and perhaps in other states, to provide Federal help for state unemployment systems.

But the most important issue we need to focus on is health care for these laid-off workers and their families. They will be able to scrape by on unemployment compensation, but in no way will they be able to pay for continued health care coverage after lay-off.

Moreover, it is very much in the national interest for the existing health plans, both corporate and union, to continue to cover them. We cannot afford for those existing health plans to be destabilized, because that will mean that even when the industry recovers, the trend toward more uninsured Americans will continue. In addition, the public health system in this country cannot absorb all these laid-off workers.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Wilhelm is giving the needs of what he saw on September 25, the needs of millions of laid-off hospitality workers for Federal help with unemployment compensation as well as with continued health care coverage.

These workers and small business operators in communities all over our Nation constitute the backbone of their local economies, in North Carolina as well as other States. These workers may be expendable to the airlines, but they are essential to the economic well-being of their families and their communities. Their economic security is as important to the Nation as

the fiscal soundness of our airlines. We should help both.

These workers receive low wages and have meager resources to draw upon during a crisis like this. Neighborhood food pantries and food banks currently have insufficient inventory to respond to the sudden increase of unemployed workers. We must expedite this package and hope that the distribution of these funds to families becomes a reality, because the community resources will not be sufficient to address this emergency for food and housing and utilities in the interim.

Our economy was declining before the attack of September 11. It is now getting worse. We must find ways to restore the public confidence, capacity, and commitment to our economy; that is, for people to travel and spend money. We must ensure the safety of Americans when they travel. We also must retrain unemployed workers and marshal their talents and skills into productive enterprises, including infrastructure development in rural and urban communities and the development of affordable housing. We also must raise the minimum wage to a meaningful level of wage.

We must take these steps and others towards recovery. We must understand we have already depleted our Social Security trust funds and are resorting to deficit spending, because already we have spent the projected budget surplus. And we have very few resources because of the unwise, huge tax cuts earlier this year.

These are tough times and require wise stewardship of our economy. As we move forward, Mr. Speaker, to recover and rebuild, we should move forward together. We have bailed out the airlines, and now we have an excellent opportunity to respond and help workers who so desperately need it. They have lost their jobs due to the crisis resulting from the terrorist attack. We now have an opportunity to support the American workers. We must support the American workers.

Again, I congratulate the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) on his leadership and all of those who cosponsor this legislation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank the gentlewoman.

I would alert my colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON), and his traveling companions, and I would ask the American public to pay attention to the next hour that interrelates in this global village. I just want the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) to know that we have less than 10 minutes, and I will not take all of that time. His traveling companions are my good friends, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES), with whom I serve on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. And they are going to consume the next hour, and I am sure they are going to enlighten us with reference to recent and laborious travel they have

undertaken and as it relates to our present circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, last week I received a call from George Mador. Mr. Mador is the President of L&M Aircraft Services, and he called my office looking for help. L&M is a small aircraft maintenance company that services charter airlines transporting passengers to and from the Bahamas. L&M has only seven employees, and many of them have been with the company for the majority of the company's existence. However, in the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, L&M is now facing imminent bankruptcy; and its seven employees, therefore, are facing certain unemployment.

George told me that he did not want to get out of bed this morning because of the reality that he will have to lay off at least half of his staff by the end of the week as a result of zero income in the past 3 weeks.

Last week's payroll left George and some of his employees without a paycheck and L&M \$500 in the hole. With no apparent income coming in the past 2 weeks, the future of L&M airport services and its seven employees are undoubtedly in jeopardy.

At the three international airports that I am privileged to serve, Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood, Palm Beach, and Miami, there are more than 300 small businesses like L&M that are now on the verge of bankruptcy as a result of lost income. In Miami-Dade, as I have said earlier, the airline industry is the economic engine representing more than 9 percent of the county's total workforce. Thousands of employees already have or will lose their jobs, and hundreds of businesses will go under nationwide if Congress does not expedite this legislation, as well as other legislation.

The headline in this morning's Palm Beach Post read, "Florida's layoffs worst in 10 years." That is not unique to Florida. It happens to be the place that I am privileged to represent. But those layoffs nationwide are immense, and we have a responsibility here in this institution to do something about it and to do it now, for all of the workers of this country.

This country has a historical precedence in protecting our economy when it needs it most. During the Depression, and I was born during that period, and my mother saw the earlier stages of the real Depression, the 1929 crash. Although we were in a different kind of society, I can tell you that the week of the crash itself, 1,000 persons committed suicide.

So last week when I introduced this legislation someone said I was being incendiary, because I was using the facts to demonstrate what can and likely will happen in this country, and among those things are increased child abuse, increased domestic violence, increased alcoholism, and, indeed, crime will increase.

People ask, how can we afford to do what you are saying, Al? I ask them,

how can we afford not to? During the Depression, President Roosevelt worked with Congress and initiated the New Deal. From Social Security to Job Corps programs, the WCC and the WPA, the New Deal succeeded in stimulating a dead economy, much more dead than ours is now, while at the same time creating a safety net and programs such as Social Security that would provide immediate relief as well as long-term security.

Reflecting on the programs that were created in the New Deal, President Roosevelt in 1936, the year of my birth, said, "America got something for what we spent, conservation of human resources through the CCC camps and through worker relief, conservation of natural resources, of water, soil, and forest; billions of dollars for security and a better life. While many who criticize today were selling America short, we were investing in the future of America."

Today, at a time when our country mourns and hurts, it is the responsibility of the Federal Government and the United States Congress to do what it needs to do in order to help all Americans deal with these hard times, all working Americans especially. For Congress to remain silent at a time hundreds of thousands of Americans have lost their jobs as a result of the terrorist attacks would be nothing short of irresponsible.

Another Roosevelt quote from May of 1932. President Roosevelt said, "The country needs, and unless I mistake its temper, the country demands, bold, persistent experimentations. It is common sense to take a method and try it; if it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something."

Domestic security is not just protecting our borders with guns and soldiers. It is not just protecting our planes and airports. On the contrary, domestic security is also about protecting our economy.

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It is about protecting our industries and our entrepreneurs, and it is about protecting all of America's workers. If we fail to consider these crucial elements of our country, while charting a response to the cowardly acts of terrorism that occurred 3 weeks ago, then we ultimately allow the terrorists to succeed in altering our lives for not just days, but for years to come; and that new normalcy that we will have will be but a fading memory of the old normalcy before September 11.

I want to applaud, Mr. Speaker, as I conclude, all of the agencies of our government: FEMA, the firefighters in New York and at the Pentagon that came from all over this great country of ours; the police officers here on Capitol Hill that have worked, as reported today in Roll Call magazine, some of them, lots of them, most of them, 72 hours a week, protecting the interests of America's Congress persons, as well as those of us that live here and work

on Capitol Hill. I applaud those officers, the officers in New York, as well as those from around the country.

I would like to especially applaud the FBI for the enormity of the task that they have undertaken in the face of sometimes unwarranted criticism; the same for the Central Intelligence Agency, and FEMA, which lost its own building, its own offices, in the World Trade Center. They too are to be complimented.

But most of all, the people of New York City, the people of Washington, D.C., the people in Pennsylvania where the tragedies struck home the hardest, and they felt the victimization more than those of us with our rhetoric, more than those of us with our creative notions about what we can do in order to set and stabilize our economy. They felt that pain, and they responded in kind as Americans are wont to do when they are faced with difficult and tragic times.

I ask all of our colleagues, what would we be doing, what would we be doing if a tactical nuclear weapon had been used in either of the three sites where folks were victimized and lost their lives and families who are still mourning them? And what makes anybody think that if these fools had the tactical nuclear weapon that they would not have used them, for they feel they have some divine mandate from God to eliminate people who do not think like them.

Had it been a nuclear tactical weapon, none of us would have gone home, no airports would be open, and we would be here in this building and the people in the other body would be in that building until such time as we could conference with real solutions, not just for big dogs feeding at the trough, but for all Americans. I entreat this country to answer that question, How we can afford it? Simply by saying, we cannot afford not to afford it. There are outyears in this tax cut that has been put forward. Anybody in their right mind would know that we can repeal those tax cuts in the years 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, and take care, as Franklin Roosevelt did, of the needs of our country now.

DISPLACED WORKERS RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIBERI). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to also lend my voice to the 100,000 displaced airline workers. The terrorist act of September 11 left a colossal void in the hearts of all Americans. It has not only had an emotional impact on our Nation; it is having a significant economic impact as well.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we have a responsibility as Members of this House to assist those whose lives have been threatened by the downturn of the

aviation industry and their jobs are on the line for possibly cuts and layoffs. The economic crisis is not just limited to the employees, though, of the major commercial carriers who feel the pinch of an industry-wide slowdown. It is affecting the sky caps that do not know whether or not they can count on checking bags at curb sides to make a living. The crisis is affecting counter agents. I talked with a young lady who is a mother of six, single parent, Latino, who is saying that she is being laid off because there are not enough people who are coming to purchase tickets to get on the planes. It is affecting the travel agents who fear for the future of their small businesses as bookings decline. A lot of those, Mr. Speaker, are women-owned businesses. It is the hotels that are near the airport, where the workers, the cleaning ladies, the cooks, and all others are affected by this displaced workers program.

We also have the tourist attractions. We know that tourism is \$6.7 trillion to this economy. If we do not have tourists coming to the various States coast to coast, workers will lose their jobs in the aftermath of this cowardly act of September 11.

It is the thousands of workers, including workers from Boeing and other aviation and engine manufacturers, who face massive layoffs as a result of this tragedy. It is essential for the administration and Congress to move aggressively in addressing the needs of America's workers. These men and women are hard-working individuals who are buying their homes, raising their families, and making significant contributions to the greater economy.

In the days and weeks ahead, we will face enormous financial pressures; and so will they, including credit card bills, mortgage payments, and utilities, tuition bills, medical bills, and other essential outlays. I would like to see the Congress take up an immediate package which would address the medical care needs, job retraining, and severance pay. The tragic incidents of September 11 have already touched and affected so many Americans, Mr. Speaker. We should do everything in our power to limit further damage to the American economy and, most importantly, to American families.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the 140,000 airline industry workers who have been or are expected to be laid off.

I am a cosponsor of Mr. GEPHARDT'S legislation, H.R. 2955, the Displaced Workers Assistance Act. I urge the House swift adoption of this or similar legislation. However, I also want to call attention to legislation I introduced in March, long before this crisis. My bill, H.R. 886, would eliminate Federal income taxation of unemployment benefits.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that 90 percent of all unemployment compensation claimants owe taxes on their benefits and that Federal taxation eats up 17 percent of their benefits. This is a form of taxation that is regressive and cruel, because it takes