

NOT VOTING—15

Boxer	Kerry	Smith (OR)
Ensign	Murkowski	Thomas
Enzi	Roberts	Thompson
Helms	Sarbanes	Torricelli
Kennedy	Sessions	Wellstone

The nomination was confirmed.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The President shall be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now return to legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. NELSON of Florida). Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 12 noon, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, and with the time to be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from New York.

THE ECONOMY AND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about an issue of great concern to my constituents and, indeed, to our entire country—the state of our Nation's economy. We know our economy was already in recession on September 10 and it was devastated on September 11 by the horrific attacks we suffered, and it is stalled now. Too many Americans are out of work. Too many have seen their pension and retirement security disappear because of the illegal, unethical, and simply inexplicable behavior of corporate executives. Too many people who lost their jobs as a result of September 11 have not yet been able to find work.

Let me just mention one of the hundreds of thousands—millions of such people: A New Yorker by the name of Felix Batista. Mr. Batista had worked for years, 25 years I believe, as a member of the wait staff at the restaurant known as Windows On The World at the top of the World Trade Center. He has four children. He was on vacation on September 11 when 73 of his coworkers were murdered. He lost not only friends and colleagues, he lost his job, and he has been unemployed since that terrible day. He is a man who had a wonderful employment record who now spends his days looking for work. He exhausted his unemployment benefits almost 3 months ago. How is he going to support his four children? He is a victim of the terrorist attacks on New York and America, and he is not alone.

Like so many other New Yorkers and Americans, despite their steadfast efforts to find work, and their overwhelming desire to get back to work, they remain out of work, struggling to

make ends meet. In New York, there are 135,000 New Yorkers who have exhausted their benefits. Across the country, the number of people who have been unemployed for 6 months or longer has almost doubled, from 800,000 to 1.5 million in the last year, and that number is expected to increase to more than 2 million by December.

What have we, the elected representatives of all the people, including the people who are unemployed, the people such as Felix who have lost their jobs—what have we done to respond? We have extended unemployment benefits once—but only once. Contrast that with the recession of the early 1990s when Congress extended temporary benefits five times. But this year, even in the wake of the combination of a slowdown in the economy and terrorism, we have only extended benefits once. Once is not enough. Congress must act to extend unemployment insurance and disaster unemployment assistance for an additional 13 weeks each.

With more people losing their benefits every day and being put into the terrible position in which Mr. Batista finds himself, these extensions should be passed before Congress adjourns.

The Wall Street Journal says our economy is in the midst of a “jobless recovery.” From what I hear, that phrase is only half true.

Across New York State, 553,000 New Yorkers are out of work, and the same story is true of company layoffs and plant closings in Niagara Falls, Rochester, and so many parts of New York.

Unfortunately, this is a story that is compounded by the corporate irresponsibility and illegality. They have added even more uncertainty to our economic condition. We not only are seeing plants closing and people losing their jobs because there is no business and there are no orders, but we are also in Rochester seeing 500 people out of work after Global Crossing filed for bankruptcy.

If there is any doubt that the economic situation is not producing jobs for people, take a look at this chart. It shows the number of jobs that are available compared with the number of people who are looking for work. As you can clearly see, during most of 2002, jobseekers far outnumbered job availability. In fact, in June, there were almost three jobseekers for every available job.

When President Bush took office in January 2001, there were approximately 1.5 jobseekers for every job. In just a short year and a half, we have gone from one job opening for every one and a half unemployed person to one job opening for nearly three unemployed persons.

But only looking at the statistics and the unemployment rate doesn't paint a complete picture. The constituents that I talk to in New York describe an endless, frustrating job search—that hopeless feeling that comes when you go out every day and

read the want ads and follow up every single lead. These are people who are young and old and middle-aged. They are male, they are female, they are skilled and unskilled; they are white, they are black, and they are Latino. They are every kind of American. They want to work. But until this economy turns around, they need additional help.

The so-called jobless recovery has hit long-term unemployed workers particularly hard. The number of people who cannot find jobs for 6 months or longer has grown by almost 90 percent in the past year. In fact, the share of the unemployed today who have been without work for more than 26 weeks exceeds that of the recession of the early 1990s and the early 1980s.

According to a recent study, “an increase in the long term unemployment of workers with significant workforce experience” is particularly striking. But why should we be surprised? We have companies such as Enron, Global Crossing, WorldCom, and Tyco that are laying off, going into bankruptcy, and rendering unemployed highly skilled workers—people who got their education, went to college, and improved their skills. They were part of the new economy, and, all of a sudden, they find themselves on the unemployment lines.

What this means for real Americans is that people who are trying hard, who have played by the rules, who have been responsible, and, through no fault of their own—a corporate executive who commits illegalities, or a terrorist who destroys a building—are now unemployed.

The number of workers who have exhausted their benefits has doubled compared to 2 years ago. The number of workers who have exhausted their State benefits is 2.3 million, more than we had 10 years ago during the recession of the early 1990s.

As you can see from this chart, the number of workers exhausting their unemployment benefits without a job has risen steadily since last spring. If you are wondering what this means for individual States, I have information about every State in our country. This is not just a New York problem. This is a national problem. We may have the highest number of people who have exhausted their benefits, but, of course, you would expect that. We lost tens of thousands of jobs because of the attack and the collapse of the buildings. Because it was a crime scene, they couldn't reopen and get back into business.

Our unemployment rate in New York City is 8 percent—higher than the national average—unfortunately reflecting a condition that affects all Americans.

Back in the recession of the early 1990s when the first President Bush was in office, people who were unfortunate enough to lose their jobs got a compassionate response from the White House. The first President Bush said: You