

my hearts of hearts—I have been around here a while—I do believe President Obama has learned from history. I do believe President Obama is a student of history, because if you are not a student of history you are going to repeat the mistakes of the past. I think he knows what works and I think he knows what doesn't work. So let's get behind him on this first initiative. Let's get it done. Then we will attack each and every problem, because there are many we have on our plate, but we will deal with them. I am confident—this is America—we will be stronger at the end of the day.

Thank you very much, Madam President. I yield the floor, and I note 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. TESTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. TESTER. Madam President, we have made some difficult decisions over the past few months. After years of failed policies that have dragged our economy into the ditch, we still have many more difficult decisions ahead.

The next big decision will be for Republicans and Democrats working together on a final version of the jobs bill. Now we have an opportunity to focus on a bill that will rebuild our economy from the ground up by putting Americans back to work right now.

The jobs bill we passed yesterday creates jobs—up to 4 million of them—and saves many more by investing in our roads, bridges, water systems, energy facilities, and our schools.

This is long-term infrastructure that will support our economy for generations to come. The jobs bill also invests in what matters—people. It invests in health care and an education, puts cops on the street.

Where I come from, we call things as we see them. The word “stimulus” is a Washington, DC, word that doesn't mean much in my book. That is why, from day one, I have called this the jobs bill because that is exactly what it is.

You are either for jobs or you are against jobs. Every day, we hear of layoffs by the tens of thousands.

Unemployment numbers are skyrocketing. Businesses—and even entire industries—are being forced to call it quits.

The national housing slump is taking its toll on Montana's timber industry. The Columbia Falls Aluminum Company is at risk of closing its doors after decades of being a major driver of the economy in Flathead Valley. The Stillwater Mine has laid off hundreds of its employees.

Montana's unemployment rate jumped from 4.9 percent in December

to 5.4 percent last month. That is an increase, in 1 month, of a half percent.

The numbers are grim, and they are real. Now is the time for Congress to vote for jobs.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. This picture is worth much more than that. It is a picture that I came across in the Whitefish Pilot the other day. It was taken by a guy named David Erickson.

The man in this picture is standing on a street corner in Whitefish, MT. He is holding a cardboard sign that says: Work needed. He is someone whom I represent in the Senate. He is one of the 950,000 Montanans whom I am proud to call my boss. His story is a story of millions of Americans right now—millions of Americans who either don't have a job or who went to work today wondering if it will be the last day on the job.

Millions of Americans are wondering how they are going to be able to continue to put food on the table for their families or pay their mortgage or pay for medicine or pay for childcare.

We are not talking about a few folks who drew a short stick. We are talking about millions of Americans who are in the same boat as this guy in the picture—folks who are paying a tough price for the failed economic policies of the past.

Some DC politicians say we don't need to pass a jobs bill because the current recession is only temporary. I ask you to tell that to the guy standing on the street in Whitefish, MT, or to the unemployed woman who wrote me to say she is willing to sweep the streets with a broom if we will give her a job.

These are proud folks. They don't want unemployment checks; they want paychecks. Right now, work is needed. That is the task ahead for my friends in the House and Senate who are working on the final version of the jobs bill.

We need jobs, jobs, and more jobs. We don't need politics as usual. Now is not the time for Congress to be against jobs. It is the time for Congress to work together to put folks back to work by investing in America.

I yield the floor and 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.

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

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

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent under morning business to use such time as I may consume.

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

#### STIMULUS PACKAGE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, we have an opportunity in the next day or

two to do something extremely significant to create jobs in this country, to help rebuild the middle class of this country, and to help rebuild confidence in the economy and to turn things around in America. I am anxious to do that, and I know our leadership is working very hard at this moment.

I thank Senator REID and everyone involved in this effort, the Speaker, and I thank our colleagues who have worked across the aisle with us to be able to address what is the most serious economic crisis certainly since the Great Depression. We have seen numbers of jobs lost that only rival back to 1945.

In the morning I had the opportunity to chair a meeting with business leaders from around the country in every part of the economy, from retail sales to restaurants to manufacturing to homebuilders, realtors, the health care industry and information technology. One thing came through loudly and clearly.

First, they are optimistic about America. They want to say we can get through this. But there is a sense that we have to move boldly and we have to get something done to turn things around. That is what this economic recovery package is all about.

We know the numbers. Certainly I know the numbers in Michigan. My constituents, the families of Michigan, understand the numbers of what has been happening to people in my State and across the country. But we have seen since December of 2007 over 3.6 million jobs lost.

It is my understanding now we have more people looking for work than there are available jobs. As a result of policies, of actions and inaction in the last 8 years, we now see over 11.7 million workers without a job. They want to work. People want to work. They work hard. People in my State right now are working hard if they are working. They may be working one job, two jobs, three part-time jobs to try to hold it together. But they want to work. We have seen the set of economic policies and inaction for too long that has created this horrible economic tsunami for too many people in this country.

In my home State, unemployment is 10.6 percent, the highest in 25 years. That is only the people we count. It does not count the people who have been unemployed so long that they are no longer involved in the numbers.

The people of Michigan want to work. They want jobs. They want to be able to pay their house payment, be able to put food on the table, be able to have their small business be successful, be able to manufacture and make things in Michigan for this country and be a part of a vibrant middle class, which has been so wonderful about our country. That is what this economic recovery package is all about. We don't want to see these numbers, 3.6 million lost jobs.

This is a picture from Miami. It is a little bit warmer in Miami than it is in

my State at the moment, although they cannot snow ski. That is something we encourage people to do. I know in your home State of Pennsylvania as well, it is a little bit colder. We are enjoying the wonderful north at the moment. But this is serious. On this picture you could take off Miami and put Michigan and it would be the same. This is a picture of a thousand people who lined up for 35 firefighting jobs in Miami. First, this recovery package will help keep those firefighters on duty. It will help keep police officers on duty. It will help keep teachers in our classrooms. It is critically important that that part of the package be passed.

But when you look at a thousand people—and we have seen thousands of people show up in lines around block after block for jobs—this is not about them wanting to work. It is about whether we are going to have economic policies that create jobs both in the short run and in the long run. I do not want to see any more of these pictures than I absolutely have to—Americans who are standing in line waiting to try to get one of a handful of jobs available.

This is about creating jobs in America. That is what this is about. We want to turn those numbers around. We know there is no silver bullet. Believe me, I don't think there is anybody here who wishes more there was a silver bullet because I would take it, I don't care whose idea it was. We don't have a silver bullet. But we do know from talking to smart people, economists, from conservative economists to liberal economists to everything in between, we do know there are things that will make a big difference. In fact, those same economists were telling us that those things would make a difference last year and the year before and the year before. Unfortunately, there were not the votes, the support to be able to do those things.

Now it has changed. We have a different leader in the White House. We have different Members of the Senate who now agree with the majority of the economists in the country about what should be done to be able to move us forward; what should be done on jobs, and housing, and critical investments to be able to get the economy going again.

I am very proud of the fact that we have in front of us a plan that is part of a three-legged stool. We have Secretary Geithner, who was testifying yesterday in the Banking Committee. Today he is in the Budget Committee, which I am on, talking about two other critical pieces. Housing, how do we get housing going again? How do we stimulate the housing markets? How do we create a bottom in this economic freefall so we can get investments going again and people can stay in their home or buy a new home. Second, he is talking about how do we get credit flowing again, so we are not only giving money to banks but they are

loaning the money so that small businesses can get the credit they need, so that the manufacturers, large and small, in my State can get the credit they need to be able to operate, to be able to make parts, to be able to do business. We also know it is critically important that people be able to buy a car.

The two biggest investments most people will make are their home and their automobile. We in Michigan would like them to buy a lot of automobiles, made in Michigan, by the way.

The reality is we have seen credit shrink and dry up in a way that has caused incredible damage to the economy. So there are three pieces—two of those Treasury is tackling through existing dollars—that is incredibly important—and the third one is what we are doing in terms of creating jobs. The bottom line is not about just creating jobs; it is about rebuilding the middle class of this country. Every other country looks at us with envy because of this great economic engine, this great quality of life engine called the middle class of America. That is what we are investing in for the future. The people of this country who have not seen any kind of assistance through trickledown economics over the last 8 years, people who said, hey, how about us? How about my job? What you are doing is just talking about a few people. How about the majority of people?

This economic recovery package is for the majority of Americans. I am very pleased to see that we basically have, in this American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, three goals. One is the focus on creating or saving up to 4 million jobs. Believe me, I know you share that we want that to be 4 and 5 and 6 million and we are not going to stop just because we pass this recovery package. But this is a critical investment in jobs.

We want to make sure there are tax cuts for families, middle-class families. Let's put money in the pockets of the middle class for a change, rather than only those at the top, in terms of wealth. And we want to invest in America's future. That is what we are all about.

I am very proud that there is an emphasis on the new green economy which does all of these things at once. We are here talking about investments in new technologies that can be built in America. I know colleagues probably get tired of me saying it, but it is not enough to invest in research and development or to be able to provide incentives for using alternative energy—wind or solar or buying electric vehicles. We want to build them in America. Mr. President, 70 percent of the jobs in the stimulus in wind energy are in manufacturing wind turbines. There are 8,000 different parts in a wind turbine. I can assure you we can make every single one of those in Michigan and the ones we can't, we will outsource to Pennsylvania.

The reality is we can build the wind turbine. We can build the solar panel.

A third of all of the polysilicon materials used in solar panels are actually created in Michigan through Dow-Corning. Unfortunately, too much of that is shipped out to other countries. They build the solar panel, it comes back and it is used. We have incentives in this package that will help make sure they are built here—a new 30-percent manufactured tax credit for alternative energy.

We are not competing with low-wage countries on these issues. We are competing with countries such as Germany. That is not exactly a low-wage or low-cost country but a country that has a specific manufacturing strategy and tax incentives. This proposal does that. It invests in a number of different alternative energies and focuses not only on research and development, on producing the energy, but also on making sure that we are putting an emphasis on manufacturing.

We also here have a strategy for moving to plug-in electric vehicles that are so important for our future—first, by investing in advanced battery technology, research, and again manufacturing; investments for those to be done here.

I was very excited when we saw Ford developed the first Ford Escape hybrid SUV, the first plug-in hybrid SUV. It was great, done in America, actually being built in Missouri. But the battery had to come from Japan. We don't make the battery here. Japan has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in creating the battery technology to get there first in the competition for the next generation of vehicles.

South Korea, Germany, China, and even India have put together a manufacturing strategy to focus on these things. This recovery plan does that for the first time. It puts America back on track with investments in battery technology development and manufacturing. Secondly, it does something critically important—and I wish to thank Senator CANTWELL for her leadership and I am proud to work with her in the effort to create expensing tax incentives for manufacturing of electric vehicles, manufacturing incentives not only for those currently making a profit and for startups and those not making a profit at this time. That is critically important for you to have the research in the battery development, incentives for manufacturing the vehicles, and then we also have consumer tax credits for purchasing vehicles.

We know that when you first create a new product, whether it is your BlackBerry or your iPhone, your computer, whatever it is, it is far more expensive in the beginning. If you sell a large volume, the price comes down. So at the beginning we know consumer credits are very important to help with that initial cost. There are credits of up to \$7,500 for purchasing a vehicle, the kind of vehicle we want for the future. In this package, we raise the total on the number of vehicles that would qualify for that credit.

I wish to thank President Obama and his team for advocating for the Federal Government to be part of creating a market by making a commitment to purchase vehicles for the Federal Government. We purchase a lot of cars and trucks. We can help create that market not only for building the vehicles but to bring the price down to consumers by creating a larger market. That is in here as well.

There is also a major focus on what has been called the smart grid, to make sure we have the electric capacity. I am told today, if every one of us had a plug-in electric vehicle and plugged it in, the lights would go out. We would be in trouble. We do not have the capacity. So we are focusing on that as well.

Senator CANTWELL's amendment focuses on what is called smart meters in homes. Again, we are talking about a strategy that, frankly, I am very excited about because it is focused on jobs and developing those technologies and it is focusing on the future.

Frankly, it is focusing on the ability for us to get off foreign oil. The last thing we want, and the way we have been headed, is to exchange dependence on foreign oil for dependence on foreign technology. This recovery package says, you know what, that does not make any sense. Let's create jobs and, at the same time, be working toward getting us off foreign oil, making sure we can keep the vehicle production in this country because we certainly do not want to be asking other countries for their tanks or their trucks or other vehicles. So it is a national security issue.

But let's do this in a way that makes sense in terms of a total strategy. So in this recovery plan we do a number of things for green technology. But there is a strategy, a plan, job training being another critical part of the plan. That is in here as well.

We also know we can immediately create jobs rebuilding America. Some folks will criticize that somehow the spending on jobs for roads and bridges, water and sewer systems and other projects does not make sense. It makes a lot of sense. We have about 25 percent of the bridges in this country that are viewed as structurally unsafe. We need to be about the business of giving a facelift to America. For those who are in our middle years now, we understand that. The truth is we have not been investing in American infrastructure. We have not been investing in roads, bridges, water and sewer.

Guess what. There is a new kind of infrastructure. It is called the Internet. I want the small businesses in Michigan to have access to high-speed Internet so they can do business around the world and stay in Michigan. The capacity to do that is helped in this bill.

We also make sure hospitals can have access to technology so they not only make sure they are providing complete information in the care of someone but they are cutting costs. We are talking

about not only traditional infrastructure and water and sewer and roads and bridges and public transportation, which is critically important, but we are also talking about looking to the future—as our President has said, not looking back but looking to the future.

Part of what is in the future, as well, is investing in key portions related to education, related to access to college. That is here as well, all of which keeps people working and creates opportunities. When you help a family afford to send their kids to college, they are not then trying to figure out, since home equity loans are hard to come by now, how in the world they are going to juggle and be able to make the house payment and be able to send the kids to college.

So this is all part of the picture in terms of stimulus. I would suggest this is critically important and long overdue.

We also have a focus in here on those who have been caught up in this economic tsunami, those who have been hurt. I can certainly speak for Michigan because it has been multiple years, not 1 year, not 2 years, that we have seen job loss.

In this package, we also make sure individuals and businesses that are hit the hardest receive assistance. We make sure we extend unemployment compensation—in the hardest hit States, up to 33 weeks for an individual. We provided extra help in putting food on the table, to be able to keep health care.

It is great to have COBRA. If you have health insurance through your employer, then you go on unemployment and the COBRA payment can cost almost your entire unemployment check to be able to keep health care for your family. So we provide help for families, while they are going through a transition to get new employment.

We also—this is very important to Michigan and I know to the Presiding Officer's State as well—make sure we have in place support for workers who have lost their jobs because of unfair trade practices and make sure job training, health care, and other assistance is available as well.

We also know many people who, through no fault of their own, are finding themselves with no health care and needing to go to Medicaid. For individuals without health care, States are being hit very hard. There were 25,000 new individuals in December in Michigan who signed up to get health care assistance. This will help with that as well.

Families in America are hurting. This package recognizes that and supports them and, frankly, according to every economist, creates a huge stimulus to the economy as we are doing that. It makes sense that when someone is out of work and they receive a little bit more money in their pocket, they are going to spend it. They do not have the opportunity to save it. They are going to have to spend it to be able

to pay the mortgage, the rent, to be able to pay for food. We have heard this from economists, we have heard it actually for several years now. We have been hearing from economists that the quickest way to stimulate the economy, to get money in the economy, is to extend unemployment benefits, to help with food assistance because the people are going to go to the grocery store, they are going to buy the food. The grocers are going to be able to turn around and purchase food supply from vendors and then the ripple is very large. So we did that because it is both a stimulus and it is also the moral thing to do, the right thing to do, when people in America are hurting.

We know, again, there are more people out of work than there are jobs available. We have, I believe, a moral obligation to pay attention and do what we can to help while families get back on their feet.

There are many parts of this bill, but another important part for families is in the ability to put money in their pockets, in terms of middle-class tax cuts, child tax cuts for families, and to be able to make sure any tax relief is targeted to those first who have not received much of a tax cut in a long time. But, secondly, there are those in the middle class who most need to have money in their pockets and those working hard to get into the middle class who most need money in their pockets as well. We make sure we also focus on helping our veterans and seniors put money into their pockets. Again, we know this will help stimulate the economy.

Overall, I am here to say this package needs to get done. It needs to get done as quickly as possible. It needs to get done by tomorrow or by Friday. I hope we will not see more filibustering going on and more delays.

I hope we will come together. No one says anything we pass is perfect. We do the best we can. In this case, I have to say this is something economists have said will work. We know we need the jobs. We know families need help. We know what we need to do for investments in the future. We know what we need to do to support small businesses, what we need to do to be able to support manufacturing, to keep jobs in America.

This is not rocket science. We know what needs to be done. This package addresses that. This is about creating jobs in America. That is fundamentally what this is about. We have gone for too long, we have lost over 4 million manufacturing jobs, good-paying, middle-class jobs in America in the last 8 years. We have over 11 million people out of work today. Now is the time. Now is the time for us to help the people of America get back to work.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HAGAN.) The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### LAS VEGAS TOURISM

Mr. REID. Madam President, during the Presidential campaign, candidate Barack Obama came to Nevada 20 times. Most of those visits were to Las Vegas. It is a place he and I have spoken about lots of times. His staff who came with him loved Las Vegas. I want everyone to understand that when President Obama, at his press conference Monday night, said there was a need for an economic recovery plan, he was very serious about that, and he meant it.

During the question-and-answer period, the President made remarks concerning trips to Las Vegas by financial services companies and their employees. I have spoken at length with President Obama's Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel. I will speak to the President when I have that opportunity. Mr. Emanuel made it clear to me—and I know this is the case—that President Obama's criticism was aimed at the potential use of taxpayer funds for junkets.

Now, we gave a lot of money to these banks, and they shouldn't be taking junkets with any of that money, whether they go to Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, New York City, or anyplace else. That was the point President Obama was making.

We all know Las Vegas is a premier destination source of the world, and people look upon it as a good place to go for a little timeout. I repeat, during the campaign President Obama was in Nevada 20 times. In fact, he just accepted my invitation to visit again this spring, early summer for the first time as our President.

Nevada has lots of hotel rooms, but Las Vegas has more than 140,000—far more than any other place in the world. We have millions of feet of visiting space. The largest convention center in the world is in Las Vegas.

As all Americans spend less as a result of our economic crisis, it is important to note that Las Vegas, with an average daily hotel rate of only \$119, is one of America's most affordable cities to visit. It is one reason nearly 6 million people came to Las Vegas to attend more than 20,000 meetings and conventions last year.

President Obama and I agree that every penny of taxpayer funds should be protected. We also agree Las Vegas is one of America's greatest destinations for tourists, families, and businesses.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

#### STIMULUS PACKAGE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, earlier today the junior Senator from California was discussing President Clinton's 1993 tax hike bill that broke his campaign promise to cut taxes on

those making \$200,000 or less and instead raised taxes on those making more than \$20,000 a year. The junior Senator from California said this morning:

Charles Grassley: I do not think it takes a rocket scientist to know that this bill will cost jobs. That is what he said of the Clinton plan that created 23 million jobs.

That is the end of the quote of what this Senator said. It is an accurate quote, but I want to make sure there is a context.

I made that statement about the 1993 Clinton tax hike bill on seniors and the vast majority of other Americans. The junior Senator from California is saying that one tax hike bill in 1993 is solely responsible for the creation of 23 million jobs between 1993 and the year 2000 and, in a sense, we should ignore all other economic events, including the work of the Republican Congress, free-trade legislation, and many other factors that actually caused the job creation during that period. Other than being simply wrong, it revises fiscal history. I felt the need to respond to those remarks because the junior Senator from California called me out by name on the Senate floor.

I gave a speech on the Senate floor just yesterday that clearly rebuts her mistaken assertion that the Clinton 1993 tax hike bill was the cause of 23 million jobs. Perhaps she was involved in partisan negotiations on the stimulus bill instead of watching my speech at that time.

I will note that as one of five Senate conferees on the stimulus bill, I have been excluded from participating in conference negotiations and instead will only be invited to a photo op today scheduled at 3 p.m. which the Democrats are referring to as the one conference meeting that is required under the rules. DAVE CAMP, the only other Republican tax writer who is a conferee, has also been excluded from conference negotiations.

There will not be any negotiations, give or take, or compromise at that meeting; it will simply be to ratify a deal that Democrats and three Republicans out of 219 Republicans in the entire Congress have agreed to. In fact, there were more Democrats—11 in the House of Representatives—who voted against the stimulus package than there were the three Republicans who voted for it. This bill was handed over to the House Democratic leadership to write, and they wrote a bill that was loaded down with a lot of unnecessary—well, I shouldn't say unnecessary spending; I should say spending that goes way beyond the 2-year window of stimulus; a window that Dr. Summers, the President's economic adviser, said ought to be timely, temporary, and targeted. That is 2 years, that is not forever.

So this bill is not stimulative, then, or goes way beyond being stimulative, and it tended to include items that reward Democratic supporters such as unions and environmental groups. It has an enormous bailout of States that overspent their budgets and a lot of

spending that belongs in an appropriations bill but which has no place in a stimulus bill. Less than 34 percent of the Senate bill was tax relief, according to the Congressional Budget Office, which is the official scorekeeper on that matter. Less than 1 percent of the Senate bill was tax relief for small business, and small businesses are the engine for job growth in our economy, creating three-fourths of new jobs in our economy.

Since the junior Senator from California clearly did not hear my speech from yesterday, I wish to go over some of the key items she has overlooked. Two days ago, and again this morning, there was a lot of revision or perhaps editing of recent budget history. Our President alluded to it. I agree with the President there is a lot of revisionism in the debate. The revisionist history basically boils down to two conclusions: that all of the so-called good fiscal history of the 1990s was derived from a partisan tax increase of 1993; and No. 2, that all of the bad fiscal history of this decade to date is attributable to bipartisan tax relief plans earlier this decade.

Now, not surprisingly, nearly all of the revisionists who spoke generally oppose tax relief and support tax increases. The same crew generally support spending increases and oppose spending cuts. In the debate so far, many on this side have pointed out some key, undeniable facts. The bill before us, with interest included, increases the deficit by over \$1 trillion. The bill before us is a heavy stew of spending increases and refundable tax credits, seasoned with small pieces of tax relief. The bill before us has new temporary spending that if made permanent will burden future budget deficits by over \$1 trillion. All of this occurs—all of it occurs—in an environment where the automatic economic stabilizers are kicking in to help the most unfortunate in America with unemployment insurance, food stamps, and other benefits—things that are part of the social fabric of America that are meant to take care of people in need, and particularly right now when we are in a recession, they automatically trigger in to higher levels of spending. That antirecessionary spending, together with lower tax receipts and the TARP activities, has set a fiscal table of a deficit of \$1.2 trillion. That is the highest deficit as a percentage of the economy in post-World War II history, not a pretty fiscal picture. It is going to get a lot uglier as a result of this bill. So for the folks who see this bill as an opportunity to recover America with Government taking a larger share of the economy over the long term, I say congratulations.

If a Member votes for this bill, that Member puts us on the path to a bigger role for the Government, but supporters of this bill need to own up to