

In Florida's portion of this fiscal stimulus bill, the fiscal stimulation fund is going to school boards, not the State department of education so it can siphon it off, but to the school boards—Florida's share is \$2.2 billion. If those school systems want to preserve those teachers' jobs with this money, they can do that. They have to be careful. This is not recurring money, so they have to plan for how they are going to keep those teachers after this 2 years of stimulus money. But that gives them the chance to do that.

Hopefully, the whole idea is we are going to jump-start the economy back to life. In doing so, with more dollars out there, jobs will be created, the economy will start to recover, homes will not be vacated and foreclosed on and property values will rise, and then the ad valorem tax, which is the basic tax which supports education in Florida, will continue to rise as well to support those teachers who otherwise, 3 and 4 years from now, might be laid off.

What I brought to them was welcome news. I am surprised, I must say, in over some 15 townhall meetings, that I did not have a lot of negative catcalls that we have been hearing emanating out of Washington and out of the talking heads on the television. As a matter of fact, it is almost like two different worlds. You turn on the TV, turn on any of the cable shows, and you have these talking heads—sometimes talking over each other, which makes it very annoying, and it is as if this is the worst thing you have ever heard of, this stimulus bill. Of the votes up here, here we only got three Republican Senators, the two Senators from Maine—Senators SNOWE and COLLINS—and Senator SPECTER from Pennsylvania. They are the only three. Down at the other end of the hall in the House of Representatives, they didn't get any Republican Members of Congress to vote for this. You hear this chatter going on, and it is like it is so partisan and it is so awful.

That is not what I heard out there. What I heard back home this past week is: Our people are hurting. They are losing their jobs. They are losing their homes.

Unfortunately, it has hit my State of Florida big time. Our unemployment rate is now at 8.1 percent. The national average is 7.6. There are some news articles that are speculating that in Florida it is going to 10 percent unemployment. Our foreclosure rate on homes is next to California. We are No. 2. And California is 2½ times as large as Florida. As a matter of fact, there are parts of Florida where the foreclosure rate is the highest in the Nation.

An example is Fort Myers, Lee County, on the southwest coast of Florida. Our people are hurting, and they are scared.

Naturally, when the Government tries to do something, however imperfect it is, they are appreciative that something is trying to be done. Is this

the answer? Is the program the Secretary of Treasury announced the answer? We do not know. But the alternative, when the clerk called that roll Friday a week ago, was a vote that said yea or nay. It seems to me it was worth the risk to say yea in order to give our new President a chance of him trying to turn this economy around with our help.

Now, I could go through the rest of the specifics that are going in. There is money for title I over and above the normal title I which is for disadvantaged children, which has made a huge difference in our school systems over the years. There is new money here for IDEA, which is for children with disabilities. In the old days, a half a century ago, we did not load all these problems on the school districts. But now the schools take care of a lot of these problems. Children with disabilities have to have special instruction and special ed. It is very expensive. So, indeed, in this stimulus bill, the Federal Government has given additional money to the local school districts in order to try to help them.

Yes, there is money for roads and bridges. If this Senator had had his druthers, there would have been more money because infrastructure, this Senator feels, is a place to turn over dollars and create jobs. In Florida, we think that from this stimulus bill, which is a combination of about two-thirds of spending and one-third of tax cuts, all to stimulate the economy, over 200,000 jobs will be created in the next year and a half.

Well, since the recession started, we have lost more than that. In Florida, we have lost 255,000 jobs. Let's hope and pray it works. If we have to tinker with it, so be it. Ultimately, we need to get it right. I think we have taken the first right step. I think the new President is trying hard. This Senator is going to try to help him. The American people expect no less.

I yield the floor.

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow, February 24.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 5:48 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, February 24, 2009, at 10 a.m.

#### NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

##### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

LANNY A. BREUER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, VICE ALICE S. FISHER, RESIGNED.

CHRISTINE ANNE VARNEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, VICE THOMAS O. BARNETT, RESIGNED.

##### IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS VICE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 47:

##### To be vice admiral

VICE ADM. DAVID P. PEKOSKE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 50A:

##### To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. JOHN P. CURRIER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS COMMANDER, PACIFIC AREA OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 50:

##### To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. JODY A. BRECKENRIDGE  
IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

##### To be major general

BRIG. GEN. VINCENT K. BROOKS  
IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

##### To be major

KATHY L. FULLERTON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

##### To be colonel

EMIL B. KABBAN  
PAUL E. WADE  
STEPHEN H. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

##### To be colonel

BRIAN D. ANDERSON  
TAMARA A. AVERETT BRAUER  
JENNIFER D. BAUER  
MICHELLE L. BISHOP  
LOLA R. CASBY  
BARBARA A. CATON  
MARLA J. DEJONG  
JANE G. DENTON  
EDWARD F. FARLEY  
ELEANOR T. FOREMAN  
ROBIE V. HUGHES  
ROBIN E. HUNT  
SUSAN JANO  
BEVERLY J. JOHNSON  
JACK L. KENNEDY  
BARBARA L. KUHN  
SUSAN M. MCNITT  
ALTHEA B. MILLER  
KELLEY C. MOORE  
NANCY A. OPEHEIM  
PENNIE G. PAVLISIN  
ALLISON W. PLUNK  
MARINA C. RAY  
RICHARD J. REUSCH, JR.  
HILDEGARDE P. STEWART  
JULIE M. STOLA  
ANNATA R. SULLIVAN  
SHARON L. TAYLOR  
MARGARET M. WALSH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

##### To be colonel

MARK T. ALLISON  
ARLEN E. BEE  
JOSEPH P. BIALKE  
JAMES G. BITZES  
JAMES R. BYRNE  
JAMES H. DAPPER  
KIRK L. DAVIES  
MELINDA L. DAVIS PERRITANO  
ERIC L. DILLOW  
THOMAS F. DOYON  
JAMES M. DURANT III  
MARK C. GARNEY  
LESLIE D. LONG  
MICHAEL J. OCONNOR  
MICHAEL J. OSULLIVAN  
FERAH OZBEK  
ROBERT A. RAMEY  
ERIC J. ROTH  
STEPHEN M. SHREWSBURY  
DOUGLAS M. STEVENSON  
PHILIP T. WOLD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

##### To be lieutenant colonel

TINA M. BARBERMATTHEW  
JOSEPH P. MOEHLMANN  
REGAN J. PATRICK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624: