

future generations and how much more can we mortgage our future to foreign lenders such as China that will buy up our debt and buy a bigger piece of control of our economy? A legitimate point. But the second thing they will say is: Listen, I hope the President and Congress will do something to help create jobs to get this country moving forward—which, of course, would involve the expenditure of Federal funds. They do not always give consistent answers, but it is easy to look behind the results in Massachusetts and in other States and see that the American people are upset and concerned about the current situation. What will we take from this?

There will be a realignment in the Senate, in terms of going forward. There will be 59 Democratic Senators and 41 Republican Senators after the new Senator from Massachusetts, Mr. BROWN, is sworn into this body. But still we will face the issues people want us to deal with.

When I went home to Illinois, I didn't shy away from health care. I took it on the road and went to South Suburban Chamber of Commerce in Cook County. That is right near the city of Chicago. Yesterday, I went to the Chicago Chamber of Commerce and invited in small businesses to talk about health care. What I heard from them I heard in letters and e-mails and messages from all over the State; that is, people are genuinely concerned. They may feel at least some satisfaction with their current health insurance, but they are worried about the future. When small businesses stand, as they did yesterday, and say: Our premiums went up 17 percent, 20 percent each year and it is unsustainable, that is a reality. If we play to a draw here and do nothing, it is understandable people will be even more frustrated and angry.

I understand the shortcomings of our effort to reform health care. I am humble enough to realize that even our best work may not be perfect and may need to be changed in the future. But it is not enough to just stop the debate and ignore the problem. I would engage and invite my colleagues from the other side of the aisle, if they truly want to govern, if they truly want to work with us, please step forward. Show us you are willing to sit down and work together; we are and we have tried and we will continue to. We should. It is not just a matter of health care. It also goes to the question of creating jobs.

We have an opportunity now to breathe life back into this economy, to get more people back to work. Like one of my friends, a Congressman from Illinois, PHIL HARE, said recently: I get personally ill when I hear the term "jobless recovery."

I share his angst and nausea, if that is what it is, over that term. There will be no jobless recovery. Until people get back to work, we are still in recovery and have not reached our goal yet, which is to end the recession with a strong economy and people back to work.

How will we reach that goal? We need to do something this year, and we need to do it quickly so we do not miss a construction season, so we can create new opportunities for jobs in building bridges and highways and airports and water projects all across America—investment in our infrastructure that pays off over the long run and creates jobs immediately. That is something we need to do. It will take money to do it.

Fortunately, there is a source. President Bush had his Troubled Asset Relief Program and took hundreds of billions of dollars and loaned them to financial institutions and companies to get through the worst of the recession. Many of those companies are paying us back, some with interest. We wish to take the money that is being paid back there and invest it back into this economy to get it moving forward.

This sounds to me like something that Democrats and Republicans should agree on. I think we both share the goal of getting out of this recession and begin moving forward, but we need a cooperative, bipartisan effort for that to be achieved. I hope we can find it. I hope we can reach common ground there.

I believe most of the Senators from most of the States represented here have heard from their Governors. My State is struggling. Others are as well. There will be layoffs of key personnel—firefighters, policemen, and teachers, for example. We should find a way to help those States get through this tough patch they have run into because of a recession and downturn in revenues. We don't want to see our children suffer because teachers are laid off and there are more kids in the classroom. We certainly do not want to endanger our communities by laying off firefighters or policemen, if that means our safety is compromised in our homes and neighborhoods. So there ought to be some common ground we can find, both sides of the aisle.

At the same time, there is a meaningful discussion underway with Senators CONRAD and GREGG, Democrat and Republican, on long-term deficit reduction. In the midst of a recession it is hard, I think terribly hard, to argue we will not be adding to the national debt as we try to bring ourselves out of the recession. But we clearly need to have a plan—a direction and a long-term goal—of reducing our deficit. We can reach that goal, and I think we should. We need to do this on a bipartisan basis.

I hope in the days ahead, when the President gives the State of the Union Address, he will speak to this and he will try to help us in reaching that common goal.

So whatever the result in Massachusetts, it will, of course, make the news today, will diminish in importance as other stories replace it. But at the end of the day, we still have responsibilities. We still need to deal with the rising cost of health care. We need to deal

with the fact that 50 million Americans do not have health insurance. We need to confront the health insurance companies that are turning down people when they need help the most with their health insurance plan. We certainly need to address the job situation, making sure our government is funding and inspiring new job growth across our country. We need to deal with a long-term deficit with a plan that starts to bring us out of our national debt or at least reduce our national debt.

That, to me, represents at least three immediate and attainable goals that should be done on a bipartisan basis. Whether we have 60 votes or 59 votes, those issues still challenge us. So the lesson from Massachusetts is the American people are expecting responsible results in Washington. We have to deliver them. We can deliver them. But to do it, we need a bipartisan approach. We need both Republicans and Democrats to work together toward these goals.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURRIS). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, is the Senate still in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back and that we move to the nomination of Beverly Martin.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF BEVERLY BALDWIN MARTIN TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to report the following nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Beverly Baldwin Martin, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 60 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled between the Senator from Vermont, Mr. LEAHY, and the Senator from Alabama, Mr. SESSIONS.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak under