

well. Not only have they failed to attract wide bipartisan support in the past, even if they did enjoy bipartisan support they wouldn't create any jobs. The President knows raising taxes is the last thing you want to do to spur job creation. He said so himself. Yet that is basically all he is proposing: temporary stimulus to be paid for later by permanent tax hikes so that when the dust clears and the economy is no better off than it was after the first stimulus folks find themselves with an even bigger tax bill than today.

The President can call this bill whatever he wants, but in reality all he is doing is proposing a hodgepodge of retreat ideas aimed at convincing people that a temporary fix is permanent and that it will create permanent jobs, and then daring Republicans to vote against it.

I think most people see through all of this. I think most Americans are smarter than that. I think they know our economic challenges are more serious than this and that they require serious long-term solutions. I think the American people realize we can do a lot better.

I have talked with a lot of job creators over the past few weeks, including many in my own State. It is no secret that they need to create jobs. Every one of them says the same thing. Yet the President refuses to do any of it.

If the President is truly interested in growing the economy and putting Americans back to work, then he will leave the temporary proposals and the half measures and the tax hikes aside. He will consult with both parties and work with us on a plan that indicates he has learned something from the failures of the past 2 years and which actually has a chance of attracting bipartisan support.

He could start with a permanent reform of our broken tax system, reducing out-of-control Federal regulations, and by passing the trade bills that have been sitting on his desk since Inauguration Day 2009. All of this is doable, all of it should attract bipartisan support, and all of it would actually create jobs. That would be a jobs plan worthy of the seriousness of the moment.

But make no mistake, what the President proposed so far is not serious, and it is not a jobs plan. After what we learned yesterday that should be clear to everyone.

I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10

minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

The Senator from Illinois.

#### THE PRESIDENT'S JOBS SPEECH

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I listened carefully to the statement made by the Republican leader. I noticed that for the last few days the Republicans have been very quiet and calm and circumspect in their reaction to the President's speech to a joint session of Congress last Thursday night. The President, of course, came to us and said this economy needs a helping hand; we have to step in and do something. We have to act and act now. He came up with a list of proposals Thursday night that I think really do address what America needs: First and foremost, to create jobs—that is the No. 1 priority. The President says we will do this by creating tax incentives for small businesses in particular to hire people who have been unemployed and to give raises to those who currently work.

He knows families are struggling across America, working families, middle-class families. Many of them are living paycheck to paycheck. A recent poll asked working families in America how many could come up with \$2,000 in 30 days, either from savings or borrowing, to meet a medical emergency, for example. It turns out barely half of the working American families polled can do so. Barely half of them could come up with \$2,000. It is a reminder to many of us who have a comfortable life that the vast majority of working families struggle every single month to make ends meet. President Obama understands that, and that is why he has proposed a payroll tax cut that will put more money in the hands of working families. In Illinois, it will be an average of about \$1,400 a year. I wish it were more, but it is a recognition by the President that to get this economy moving again, people have to have more confidence in their own situation at home and more confidence in the future. Giving working families this spending power can make that difference.

The President also understands and I am sure the Presiding Officer understands as well that many of the families who are unemployed now are desperate. I visited with many of them during the August recess, going to the Elgin Work Center and to others in McHenry County. I sat down with these people who have been out of work for months—some even years—and asked them: What is your day like? They come to these job centers, they sit down, and they work on their resumes. They pore through all of the want ads, they pore through all of the information about people seeking new employees, and they send out their resumes as quickly as possible. Of course, very few of them get any response at all.

It is a desperate situation. Some of them have lost their homes. Some of them are seeing their kids returning from college, unable to continue their studies because Dad is out of work. Some of the marriages that have been involved have been strained and some have failed because of this economic hardship. The President understands that, and I hope we do too.

Unemployment compensation is absolutely essential as a lifeline to these families, and the President makes that part of his package.

When I hear the Republican leader call these suggestions a hodgepodge, I don't think he is fair and I don't think he is just. Take a look at the specifics: incentives for businesses to hire new workers, payroll tax cuts for working families for more spending money in hand, unemployment compensation for those who are out of work so they can survive.

The President also focuses on critical people. How many of us in the last 48 hours have given a speech somewhere at home or here talking about the great first responders of 9/11? The policemen, the firefighters, the medical professionals who literally risked and some even gave their lives in response to that national emergency. We know what is happening across America. Many of these policemen and firefighters are losing their jobs, along with teachers. The President understands that, and he puts resources into saving some of those jobs so that we can have the protection we need in our communities and the teachers we need for the next generation of workers.

President Obama believes, and I agree, that we need to invest in America. When we build the infrastructure in America that will serve us in the 21st century, we create good-paying jobs right here at home. These are not jobs you can ship overseas. President Obama understands that. That is why that is a major part of his proposal. We are talking about highways and bridges and airports and ports and waterways and schools. The President understands that investment in America not only helps us today in invigorating the economy but will pay off for generations to come.

There were very few lines the President gave at his speech that drew standing applause from the Republican side. I felt at one point that the temperature of the Republican side of the aisle in the House Chamber was 40 degrees below that on the Democratic side. It was cold over there. There was one line they finally acknowledged, and that was when the President said: For goodness' sake, we owe it to our veterans who have come home to put them to work. To know that 10 percent of those people who risked their lives for America are now back home and in unemployment lines is absolutely unacceptable, and President Obama recognizes that in what he has called for to get this economy moving forward.

I don't think the Republican leader is fair in calling this a hodgepodge. It is