

issues of taxes and health care. We have had a very constructive set of hearings on tax reform chaired by Chairman BAUCUS and ranking minority member Senator HATCH. I am very hopeful that at a time when our people are so hungry for new jobs, good jobs, high-paying jobs, that we will pick up on this opportunity to bring Democrats and Republicans together, as we were on this issue a quarter century ago in enacting fundamental tax reform.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

CONGRATULATING THE LSU TIGERS

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, this past Saturday evening in my home town of Tuscaloosa, AL, there was quite a scoring event—I think most of the people in the Nation watched it—and that was between the No. 1 ranked football team in the Nation, LSU, Louisiana State University, and the University of Alabama. Senator SESSIONS and I were there. We had a bet that Senator SESSIONS and Senator VITTER initiated—and Senator LANDRIEU and I concurred with—on the outcome of the game. All in fun, but you know we all like to win.

This was a tremendous football game: no touchdowns on either side, five field goals, overtime. LSU won. I congratulate them. I congratulate my two Senator colleagues here today. It was hard fought between two great football teams, and today—people have probably seen me on the Senate floor a number of times—I have never worn the purple tie, but I have one on today because I lost the bet. We lost the game. I will not wear it every day, but out of respect for my colleagues from Louisiana: congratulations Senator LANDRIEU, congratulations Senator VITTER, congratulations to the people of Louisiana and to the football team and the coaching staff in Baton Rouge.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank my colleague, Senator SHELBY, a University of Alabama graduate and also a University of Alabama law graduate. I am a law graduate myself from the University of Alabama.

It was a fabulous spectacle this weekend. There were 103,000 people in that fabulous new stadium that has been expanded with all the colors and the band and the noise. Truly, I doubt any of us will live to see a game which is any louder than that game was. It was a spectacular event and an unusual, special event that happens in the Southeastern Conference.

So we believe in being winners. Alabama played every single play—and so did LSU, with every single play—committed to winning the football game. At the end of it, after all had been said and done, it was 6-6. I think the two best teams in the Nation clearly proved they were the two best teams in the Nation. But we had to have an overtime.

So to my colleagues, Senator LANDRIEU and Senator VITTER, congratulations. I am not really proud but I am honored and willing to wear the tie of the team that beat the University of Alabama.

We look forward to celebrating with you that fabulous game and to also having some fresh Alabama gulf coast seafood. Let the whole world know that our gulf coast seafood industry is back strong, better than ever. So congratulations.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I thank our Alabama colleagues. They are very gracious, and they are great sports in terms of this whole past week and this bet. So I am honored to be with them as they wear LSU colors for 1 day. Maybe they can keep those ties for January. Maybe after the BCS championship game they will at least wear it for an SEC victor—knock on wood—and we very much look forward to their delivering, as Senator SESSIONS said, great, delicious, fresh, and perfectly safe gulf coast seafood that all of us are going to enjoy.

So I thank them for being such great sports, and I congratulate their team for being a superteam. That was a heck of a game. It was everything it was cracked up to be. People said it would be a defensive struggle. Yet nobody imagined there would not even be a touchdown: 9-6 in overtime.

I congratulate the Alabama team that played their hearts out and is a great Alabama team.

Of course, I also want to pause and congratulate everybody in the LSU community and the LSU team. That was a hard fought struggle, a hard fought win. A lot of folks came together and made extraordinary plays. Of course, it ended with Drew Alleman's field goal in overtime. But Mo Claiborne and Eric Reid had terrific interceptions, and even the punter, Brad Wing, played a pivotal role in terms of his 73-yard punt that won the field position battle.

So there are a lot of heroes and a lot of good players on the LSU side, and I congratulate the entire LSU community.

With the rest of the State of Louisiana, we look forward—knock on wood—to several more victories leading up to, hopefully, the BCS championship game in New Orleans in the Louisiana Superdome. So, of course, we look forward to that.

Thank you, Mr. President. At this point, I turn to my colleague from Louisiana, Senator LANDRIEU.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I begin by thanking my two colleagues from Alabama for being such great sports. I never thought they would actually wear purple and gold on the Senate floor, but I am proud of them for living up to their end of the bet, for showing up appropriately dressed this afternoon.

I thank my colleague Senator VITTER for initiating this terrific bet. I am looking forward to some great gulf coast Alabama seafood. As the Senator from Louisiana said—and Senator SESSIONS alluded to—the seafood is not only plentiful, abundant, and affordable, it is also very safe. We are proud to represent the gulf coast and proud of these two extraordinary universities.

As a graduate of LSU, I am particularly proud. But our universities—both the University of Alabama and the University of Louisiana, LSU—are tremendous universities that have an extraordinary reach across all disciplines, and their football teams showed that great spirit on the field.

I want to remind my colleagues that if LSU is victorious this weekend against western Kentucky, the Tigers will advance to 10 and 0. This would be the first time they had done that since their national championship in 1958. So you know how excited our whole State is.

I also want to say the great news from this weekend is, whatever recession there was in Alabama, I think it is over because of the stimulus brought to their State by our crazy LSU fans who started to arrive on Wednesday, I understand. No one can tailgate like we can tailgate. So I think if they check their economic indicators this Monday afternoon, they all will be straight up from the good money and good fun that was had in Alabama.

But, seriously, just in conclusion, Les Miles and our team are just unbelievable, and our LSU team is just terrific. But both teams played their hearts out, and I congratulate the men on the field that night. It was an exciting game to watch, and according to the ratings the LSU-Alabama game drew the second highest rating of any CBS regular season college football broadcast since the network began its tracking.

So, again, I thank my colleagues for being good sports, and we are on the road to the national championship. We may see them again.

I yield the floor.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

WITHHOLDING TAX REPEAL

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, I rise in support of H.R. 674. The vote we have tonight is finally an opportunity to pass a truly bipartisan jobs bill, part of the President's jobs package. As I said when we held the first vote to try to repeal the 3-percent withholding tax a couple weeks ago, this vote is a no-brainer. It is pretty simple. Unfortunately, some Members objected to a small portion of that bill, the offset. That should not be a concern this time. The bill we will be voting on shortly just passed the House with 405 votes, and when is the last time we heard that? The bill we are going to vote on today has a new offset that has been endorsed by the President, so I say let's get it done.

If we pass it, every company that does business with the government can go back to thinking about hiring new workers rather than worrying about losing 3 percent of the value of their contracts right upfront, right in the beginning. If we pass it, State and local governments will not be saddled with another costly and unfunded mandate. As I said before, it is a no-brainer. If we pass it, we will finally repeal a tax that costs the government billions more to implement than it actually raises in revenue.

Let's pass this bill and let's end this stealth tax that is extremely expensive to implement and punishes many for the bad acts of a few.

That being said, as we know, we have Veterans Day fast approaching. I thank all of our men and women who have served and continue to serve. I cannot think of anything more meaningful than to come together in a truly bipartisan, bicameral way to help our jobless veterans. Unemployment and homelessness among our Active-Duty veterans and members of the National Guard and Reserves are a national disgrace and we can do better. We should not leave anyone behind. The Active-Duty soldiers and members of the Guard and Reserves fight side by side for our freedom. They face danger together, they are wounded together, and they should be treated as equals when it comes to helping them find jobs.

Back in January, I introduced the Hire-a-Hero Act with Senator KAY HAGAN. It expands the work opportunity tax credit to help companies put our veterans and members of the Guard and Reserves back to work. The President has proposed a similar action in his jobs bill. It did not include guardsmen and reservists, and that is why I hope when we take up the veterans package that I hear is being discussed, the majority leader will actually allow for that to be included. Our guardsmen and reservists, once again, deserve better.

It is time for our Senate colleagues to rally behind the men and women who have served and continue to serve. They are leaving the service and need this opportunity right now. The unemployment rate for veterans is more

than 12 percent. For members of the Guard and Reserves, it is twice the national average, as high as 20 percent in some areas. We need to treat this as a truly bipartisan and hopefully bicameral effort. It is something the American people are yearning for. They are looking for us to show leadership, to actually work together. If we can't work together with our heroes who have served and given to our country at its time of need, then I am not quite sure what we will be able to work on together.

If we do these two things, repeal the 3-percent withholding and help our veterans in 1 day, potentially 1 week, maybe it will usher in a new era of good will, something I know the Chair and I have worked to establish, as have so many other people in this historic Chamber. One good deed can lead to another good deed and that good deed can lead to another good deed, and so on.

Let's start working together. The American people are demanding it. As I have said before, we are Americans first. I may be a Republican—and I am proud to be Republican—but we are Americans first. I am way more proud to be an American. I hope others in this historic Chamber feel the same way and we can put our party differences aside and do something very important for not only our businesses in this country but also for the ones who have given so much in their service to our great Nation while serving in the military.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

ANN MARTIN

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to continue an initiative that was actually started by the Presiding Officer's predecessor, Senator Kaufman, whereby on a fairly regular basis I try to come down and recognize the service of one of our incredible Federal employees. We spend a lot of time in this body talking about policy. We oftentimes spend a lot of time also talking about what government does wrong. There are things government does wrong, but too often we don't acknowledge what government does right, particularly the incredible service many of the folks who work for our Federal Government perform.

Today, I am pleased to honor another great Federal employee, Ms. Ann Martin. Ms. Martin is the Senior Intelligence Research Specialist for the

Treasury Department's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network or FinCEN. She worked with Mexican officials to help disrupt the laundering of billions of dollars derived from illegal U.S. narcotics sales.

At the age of 29—as the Presiding Officer may recall when he was that age—Ms. Martin led a team of financial experts to compile and analyze hundreds of pieces of data. Her research analysis gave unprecedented insight into how Mexican drug cartels finance their operations in both Mexico and the United States. It also provided American and Mexican law enforcement authorities with a number of leads into cross-border money laundering and transnational organized crime groups.

Discussing Ms. Martin's work, James Freis, the Director of FinCEN, explained that “no one had ever put together a picture of this kind of financial movement across our borders.” In other words, nobody put together in an organized way the kinds of activities in which some of these drug cartels were involved.

The exhaustive and comprehensive analysis Ms. Martin conducted supported the Mexican Government's decision in June 2010 to issue new regulations to restrict the amount of U.S. dollars that could be deposited into Mexican banks. As a result, more than 700 suspicious activity reports have been filed from Mexican banks. In other words, we have gotten the leads on 700 potential activities that are now being investigated due to Ms. Martin's work.

While her time working for the Federal Government has been relatively brief, she has already made a major impact. Karen Fleischer, the Deputy Associate Director at FinCEN, had this to say:

I've been in government for 35-plus years and Ann is the kind of person that you want to hold up as an example for others. She is extremely dedicated to the agency's mission.

I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring Ms. Martin, a fellow Virginian, for the excellent work she has done and her commitment to public service.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.