

Let's be very clear about this. The Democrats' quick-fix approach has failed. Nearly 3 years have passed since Democrats passed the mother of all stimulus bills, and we have 1.3 million fewer jobs in this country than we had when the President signed it into law. Yet they are still at it. Republicans in the House have passed an avalanche of legislation aimed at liberating the private sector and getting the economy growing again. It all dies at the Senate door. Democrats are not interested. With Democrats in control of two-thirds of the government in Washington, all we get is more temporary stimulus and calls to raise taxes on the very people we are counting on to jolt this economy back to life. That is why we are standing here 3 years into this administration still talking about temporary stimulus measures paid for by permanent tax hikes—temporary stimulus measures paid for by permanent tax hikes.

Democrats don't seem interested in doing anything that will lead to economic growth. They are stuck on stimulus. They are stuck on government. They are stuck on economic policies that have already failed. So we are not arguing against extending the payroll tax cut. We just think it should not be punishing job creators to pay for it. We think that if this kind of temporary relief engineered at some lawmakers' whim is the sum and substance of Democrats' plan for getting this economy going again, we are in trouble.

The American people don't want a temporary allowance from Democrats in Washington. They want us to get out of the way, to lift the burdens to growth so they can get this economy going. That is why Republicans are proposing a very different approach to paying for this extension. We can maintain this tax relief without raising taxes on job creators. If past experience shows us anything, it is that Washington will only spend every dime it gets and then some anyway, when we need to find a solution that doesn't give more power to Washington. We will never get this economy going or help people create the wealth and jobs America needs if we continue to allow Washington to dictate all the rules of the game when it comes to our economy. At the end of the day, the real question in this debate isn't whether lawmakers in Washington should or should not extend some temporary stimulus but whether the American people should continue to allow Washington to have so much power over their lives. That is what this debate is about.

Mr. REID. Will the Chair announce the business for the day.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

CREATING JOBS BY PROVIDING PAYROLL TAX RELIEF FOR MIDDLE CLASS FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Madam President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 238, S. 1917.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S. 1917, a bill to create jobs by providing payroll tax relief for middle class families and businesses, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Madam President, I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 238, S. 1917, a bill to create jobs by providing payroll tax relief for middle class families and businesses, and for other purposes:

Harry Reid, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Jack Reed, Richard J. Durbin, Dianne Feinstein, Carl Levin, Jeff Bingaman, Patty Murray, Patrick J. Leahy, Kent Conrad, Sheldon Whitehouse, Benjamin L. Cardin, Barbara Boxer, Al Franken, Max Baucus, Robert Menendez, Joseph I. Lieberman.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I now withdraw my motion to proceed.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The motion is withdrawn.

Mr. REID. Madam President, on one of the Sunday shows, the assistant leader, the Republican whip, my friend, the junior Senator from Arizona, indicated that Republicans would not support the withholding tax proposal we had made. On Monday, that was what the Senate leadership said. So I am very happy there has been a conversion and now they agree to support it but be careful. Remember, they are very clever and unclear on how they want this paid for. One Republican Senator said he didn't want it paid for, and that, in fact, has been the standard mantra of the Republicans: Tax cuts should not have to be paid for. The Bush tax cuts, amounting to trillions of dollars, were

not paid for. That is, of course, one reason we have this huge problem with the deficit.

I think we also have to recognize that one thing our country lacks is confidence. There are a lot of reasons, but one reason the country lacks confidence is people out here are talking about how bad the economy is doing. It is doing very poorly, and I recognize that. But we have had growth over the last many months. Is it as significant and as robust as we want? Of course not, but we have a growing economy; that is to say about my friend, the prior President, President Bush, we had no growth there. That was downhill. When he came into office, there was a surplus of trillions of dollars. That was taken away with not paying for all these tax cuts, the unpaid war in Iraq, the unpaid war in Afghanistan, and at least 8 million jobs were lost. We are trying to work our way out of that, and we have worked very hard.

My friend talks about the stimulus bill, the Economic Recovery Act. Let's just talk about something I know a lot about, the State of Nevada. But for that bill, in the State of Nevada, which is very hard hit with the economic recovery, a State that for two decades had been the No. 1 place in America to come to start a business, to get a job, to buy property, that is no longer the case. That is no longer the case. But the stimulus bill has kept the schools open, has allowed people on Medicaid to continue getting some help, and we have had—because of that bill—thousands and thousands of jobs created with solar projects, geothermal projects all over the State of Nevada. Is it enough? Of course not. But let's start building some confidence and allowing people with these companies that have trillions of dollars, let's have them start spending some of it and creating jobs.

We are for tax reform. I agree with my friend the Republican leader, we should have tax reform. It is important because the Tax Code is not working. It is helping the wrong people, and we look forward to doing what we can to work that out. I was hoping in the supercommittee that one of the things they would have given was instructions to the Ways and Means Committee and the Finance Committee to come up with some tax reform that would be meaningful and build the economy even more than we could have ever dreamed, and a lot of that can be done with tax reform. So I acknowledge that.

We look forward to working with my friends on the other side of the aisle. They say they are in favor of now extending withholding and we know that has created lots of jobs and we are glad they are going to do that. But, I repeat, let's be very careful of how it is paid for. The American people believe we should pay for it the way we have suggested. The only people in the world who don't think it should be paid for in the way we suggested are the Republicans in the Senate. All the polls show

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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