

We have fires that are ravaging the great Western part of the United States. The government entities that are fighting these fires don't have the money to fight them. The two worst fires in the history of the State of California are just being tamped down, but they are still not completed. Hundreds of homes have burned. We have a country that is burning up.

The Governor of Nevada is a good man. He is a Republican Governor, and I have great admiration for him. I suggested his name to the President of the United States to become a Federal judge, and he accepted my recommendation. He then resigned that position to run for Governor. He is now conducting a 3-day event in Nevada—bringing people in from all over the West and all over the country—to talk about what is happening to Nevada. We are having so many problems in Nevada. Lake Mead is drying up, and Lake Tahoe is having tremendous problems. We have a snowpack that basically doesn't exist. We don't have many rivers in Nevada, but those little rivers that we have, including the mighty Colorado, are in deep trouble. We have snowpack in upper Colorado that evaporates before it gets into the river.

I am willing to do whatever is necessary to move forward in funding this government, but to blame us for not funding the government is really carrying things to extremes.

I have completed my statement, Mr. President.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator withhold his suggestion of the absence of a quorum?

Mr. COCHRAN. I withhold my suggestion.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:49 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2015— Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for the following Senators to speak about the importance of the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank. I ask that Senator COONS be recognized for 5 minutes but first that Senator KING be recognized for 5 minutes and that I be recognized for 10 minutes, reserving the remaining time for others who may join us.

I wish to initially yield time to Senator KING.

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

The Senator from Maine.

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. KING. Mr. President, as the Senator from North Dakota just mentioned, we are here on the floor to talk about the importance of the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank. There are a lot of issues here that are contentious and controversial, and there are arguments to be made on both sides, but this one, frankly, puzzles me. I do not understand why the Congress has not moved with alacrity to reauthorize an agency of the Federal Government that fills a gap in the private market which is not filled by private enterprise, which has been in business for over 80 years, and which helps and assists businesses large and small across America and returns money to the Treasury. This is not a cost to the Treasury. This is not some kind of budget bill that increases our deficit. This actually will increase revenue because this agency makes a net return for the taxpayers.

When General Electric last week announced the possible layoff of 500 people across the country and the moving of jobs overseas—because virtually every other industrialized country in the world has an export-import bank, an export promotion authority that is comparable to what we have, General Electric says: We are going to have to go where they provide that kind of support.

One staff member of the committee in the other body, which has voted to not reauthorize this, said: Well, for General Electric, this is a drop in the bucket.

Well, of those 400 or 500 jobs General Electric is talking about, 80 of them are at a General Electric plant in Bangor, ME, and 80 good jobs in Bangor, ME, is not a drop in the bucket.

I would invite that staff member to come to Bangor, ME, and talk to the families of those people who are going to lose their jobs because of this ridiculous policy of not reauthorizing a governmental agency that is serving the public needs of this country, particularly in an age of expanding global trade. We are competing with the rest of the world, and we are shooting ourselves in the foot in the process. It simply makes no sense.

I have visited with small businesses in Maine—as few as 35 jobs which depend upon the actions of the Export-Import Bank in order to be able to finance their receivables from foreign countries and then they can compete in the international marketplace.

There is simply no reason to not move with some speed to reauthorize this agency. We are penalizing American businesses in global competition for no good reason that I can discern. If there are issues at the Bank with its management or whatever, let's fix those. Let's have hearings. Let's find what the problems are and fix them but not eliminate an agency that is doing good and returning money to the taxpayers, particularly at this moment in American and world history where

international trade and world exports are so important.

I hope my colleagues in both Houses, on both sides of the aisle will join with us to make a simple reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank so it can continue to do the good work it has done on behalf of businesses in Maine and North Dakota and Texas and California and New York and all over this country.

This is just common sense. There are things around here that I understand we have controversies about and we can argue about, but I have not heard any argument that holds any water as to why this agency should not be continued and allowed to provide the benefits it has and does and will do for the businesses and, more importantly, the employees of those businesses all across the country.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I wish to address the issue of the Export-Import Bank reauthorization, if I might, for a few moments. My colleague, the Senator from the State of Maine, has just spoken to it, and I expect my colleague from the State of North Dakota will also follow along the same lines. I wish to join with my colleagues here today in standing up for American manufacturing and in standing up for American businesses that rely on the Export-Import Bank for the critical financing they need to export their products to the markets of the world. Many of us have said the same thing on this floor over the weeks or months since its authorization expired.

It is striking to me that because of the views of a few Members of the House and Senate, this valuable tool which has helped American companies sell their goods around the world for more than 80 years has been allowed to expire. As we just heard from the Senator from Maine, the Export-Import Bank actually operates at no cost to the taxpayer, and it is something that has helped American businesses sell almost \$30 billion in goods and supported more than 150,000 American jobs last year alone. So I really think the opposition to the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank is badly misguided. It is my hope that we will find some bipartisan path toward the restoration of this critical tool.

In my first 4 years in the Senate, I was the chair of the Africa subcommittee on the Foreign Relations Committee, and I took advantage of that opportunity to learn a great deal more about this vast continent with 54 countries and the opportunities it provides for American companies to sell their exported products to their growing markets.

Most folks think of the Export-Import Bank as principally providing financing for a few very large companies—companies such as General Electric and Boeing—and it does provide essential financing for their export sales,