

they have closed up 600 of the 800 rooms. It does not take too long to understand, with that kind of reduced revenue, suddenly, the owners of those hotels are not going to be able to pay their mortgages, their taxes.

Look at the devastating effects upon employment in the areas where they have laid off so many workers because they do not have the traffic to support all of the employees, and you see how that diminished economic activity ripples through the economy and starts to devastate not only a community but devastates a State. And when you look at the reduction in the sales tax in so many of our States, and the crisis State governments are now facing in their budgets, indeed, you see that it starts to economically devastate the Nation.

Why am I saying all this? I am saying it because we have something we can do about it in this Chamber and in the other Chamber at the other end of the Capitol, because we have in front of us a bill for establishing airline security, with all of these items on which we have generally gotten consensus such as sky marshals, such as reinforced cockpit doors, such as hijack training for airline employees. But we come to this difference of opinion on the screeners, the airport security personnel: Should they be privately contracted or should they be federalized law enforcement officers?

The reason I rise to make these remarks is because I just heard a riveting story by Senator DEBBIE STABENOW of Michigan. On a flight inbound to Reagan National Airport last night, a passenger, perhaps intoxicated, stood up and started walking toward the cockpit.

Now, mind you, the FAA has a regulation that for the last 30 minutes of a flight inbound into Reagan National Airport every passenger must remain seated. It is for the obvious reasons, with Reagan National Airport being so close to the centers of Government—10 seconds from the Pentagon, 20 seconds from the White House, and 30 seconds of a diverted flight path to the U.S. Capitol—that this was one of the safety precautions the FAA required on inbound and outbound aircraft at Reagan National Airport.

As relayed by Senator STABENOW, they were inbound, and suddenly this rather large gentleman got up and started walking toward the cockpit. What she shared with us was, she was so proud of the professionalism that then occurred, with two sky marshals sitting in first class who immediately got up, without any fuss, and got this passenger on to the floor. Apparently, there was a third Federal law enforcement officer on the plane as well, toward the back of the plane. Everyone was instructed to get their heads down, that they were diverting immediately to Dulles Airport.

The plane landed safely. All of the law enforcement personnel came out to the plane. It was handled very professionally. It was handled very safely.

I tell you this riveting story, just told to me by Senator STABENOW, to make the point that the American public desperately wants to feel safe when they get on an airplane. They want to know that the most highly qualified, highly trained personnel are the ones who are not only on that aircraft, as was just demonstrated by the sky marshals' professional behavior, but they want to know that the most highly trained, qualified law enforcement personnel are the ones who are doing law enforcement checks of the hand-carried baggage and the profiling to try to avoid any kind of incidents in the future that would jeopardize the safety of the American flying public.

Now, it just seems to me that with so much at stake, not only for the safety of people in airplanes but for the economic engine of this country, which is being so devastatingly affected in places such as my State and 30 other States where travel and tourism are one of the top three industries, it would seem to me that we ought to be able to have a meeting of the minds, enact this legislation, and get it to the President, who has said he will sign what the Congress produces, and get on about restoring the confidence of the American public in the safety of flying.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

AIRPORT SECURITY

Mr. DODD. Madam President, I commend my colleague from Florida for a very excellent statement regarding airport security. As many colleagues here, over the weekend, I, too, traveled and met with some airport administrators and officials. Regardless of where you are in the country, the message is the same. These are people who don't particularly wear any labels of Democrat or Republican, Conservative or Liberal, whatever those labels may mean to some, but to most Americans out there, the issue of being more secure on something as fundamental as air travel is basic.

They don't understand why the Republican House leadership has refused to join the 100 Members of this body and the overwhelming majority of people involved in the airline industry in getting federalization of these workers and making airports as secure as possible.

I served in the Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic and many people were going back home there on that flight yesterday. One young man served in the Navy, and he just received his leave and was going back to visit his parents from the Dominican Republic. Another woman who escaped the World Trade Center tragedy lost her life on the flight yesterday.

Obviously, we don't make any equation of terrorist acts to what happened yesterday upon the preliminary information. But it heightens the security that people want to have in air travel.

We call, again today, on the Republican leadership in the House to change their minds and adopt the bill embraced to this body 100-0 and offer the public the security they deserve.

The Senator from Florida made an excellent point.

THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY PACKAGE

Mr. DODD. Madam President, I want to take a minute and talk about the matter before the Senate, which is the economic recovery package, the stimulus package. I say to my colleagues here, and to others, that, again, this is one where the President—I know he is meeting with President Putin, and the subject matter is obviously the war against terrorism in central Asia. But it is also going to be very important in the prosecution of that war that we convey to the American public our deep concern about the present condition of our economy, and that there is clearly a recession.

The unemployment numbers are getting worse. Last month we had the highest increase in unemployment in 20 years. There is every indication that this economic downturn will be with us for some time. We have seen a staggering number of people lose their jobs, particularly at the lower end of the economic spectrum. I hope the President will be asking us to extend unemployment benefits for these people who have lost their jobs. First of all, it is a wonderful way to provide some stimulation because these are dollars that must be spent. The people on unemployment don't have the luxury, having lost their jobs, of opening up a savings account. They are trying to provide for their needs on a daily basis. Those extended unemployment benefits are dollars that end up in the marketplace. If demand is one of the issues—and I believe it is, based on the economists who have shared their thoughts with us—then clearly those who would receive these unemployment benefits are going to contribute to stimulating the economy.

Providing health care benefits—again, none of us subscribes to the notion that people who are unemployed or lose their jobs are anywhere near as much a victim as those victims on September 11, at the World Trade Center, or the Pentagon, or aboard that airplane in Pennsylvania. But they are all victims.

We know that what happened on September 11 contributed to the economic difficulties that existed on September 10. We know, for instance, that airline travel is down some 20, 30 percent. We know, as a result of that, the hotel industry and the restaurant industry—which, by the way, are the largest employers in America; some 17 million people work in the service industries these are the ones who have been hit immediately. And the people who set tables, who wash dishes, wait on tables, who clean hotel rooms, who work in

some of the more difficult and lower paying jobs in the country have lost their work. These are family members, heads of families, and they are out there wondering whether or not the next job is going to be available for them. So they are, in a sense, victims because, clearly, the events of September 11 have impacted their lives.

Many of us are suggesting as part of this economic package that we include extending unemployment benefits and health care, and we say to those people and their families that we wish we could provide you with a job tomorrow. We can't. We wish we could produce one for you immediately. We can't do that. But we can reach out to you and say during the next number of weeks we are going to provide extended unemployment benefits to you and see to it that States get back some dollars from Medicaid and the COBRA program, so you can have health care coverage during this time of difficulty. I don't think that is an exaggerated or excessive request. I hoped, frankly, that the request would be made of us to do this, rather than we making a request of the President and others to support this.

This is America. We are coming together as a people. Everybody who is hurt and has suffered as a result of these tragic events deserves an extended hand to try to see if we can't lift them up.

I was so impressed yesterday while watching the film clips of the people in New York. Average citizens were racing to help the firemen, helping to extend the hoses to try to put out the fires in the communities that were devastated by the downed aircraft. What a wonderful photograph, in a sense, during a time of tragedy. Average citizens—not firemen or policemen but people in civilian clothes—were running along the streets, grabbing firehoses and helping the departments reach the flames to try to save lives and property. That is my America. That is the America I know.

I want to see my Congress and my national leadership be as those people in the streets of Queens yesterday who were racing along to help out during a time of tragedy. That is what this economic package we have crafted tries to do. It is short term, it is focused, it is fiscally responsible, and it tries to help people who are suffering. That is all we are trying to do—give a tax rebate, a tax cut for the folks who didn't get it last spring so they might have additional dollars in their pockets to provide for family needs, and to see to it that we might invest some dollars as well in hardening up our infrastructure in the country.

Put aside September 11 for a minute. How many times have we heard over the last number of years that if you don't maintain the basic infrastructure of your country—roads, bridges, mass transit systems—economic growth suffers? So this bill will also include some dollars to try to harden up this infrastructure so we will be better prepared

to withstand the kinds of terrorist attacks that could occur that would put those pieces of infrastructure in harm's way. This bill will provide some resources for that. Of course, it puts people to work. Imagine that; we might put some people to work by passing this bill.

That is basically the package. It is designed to provide unemployment benefits, health care benefits, dollars for infrastructure, and a tax cut for people who did not get one so they might not only get a break themselves but also contribute to the demand side of the equation which is necessary if this economic stimulus package is going to provide additional lift during this time of difficulty.

I hope in these next couple of days we can come together. We have done it before in the last few weeks. These are not excessive requests. This is a fiscally responsible plan. We have done so much in the last 10 years to put our economy on a footing that none of us imagined would ever be the case: that we would actually be in a situation where we would be talking about eliminating the national debt if we wanted.

How many of us have seen those clocks in almost every city that rapidly show the increase of the national debt? Yet over the last 10 years as the result of some very fine leadership in Congress, by the Federal Reserve, and obviously the White House, we were able to make a difference to put this country on a path many people thought we could not get on again.

As we talk about an economic recovery package, it must be fiscally responsible. If we are going to spend ourselves once again into huge debt, I cannot imagine anything more that Osama bin Laden or his supporters would like to see than us not only weakened from their attacks on September 11 but that we would weaken our economy either because we made excessive tax cuts or spending additions that were unwise.

As most Americans, I am stunned. I represent the most affluent State in the country, and certainly many of my constituents would benefit directly. They are some of the top income earners in the country. I do not hear my constituents talking about the need for a \$1.3 million tax break for IBM or the Ford Motor Company as a result of repealing the alternative minimum tax.

Where is the sense of contribution? Are they like the people in the streets of Queens running and dragging those hoses along to help put out the fires, somebody who is probably making \$20,000 or \$30,000? Some of them are retired. They were racing along to help stop a fire. How about that coming out of the top income earners in the country to help put out the fire in a sense? That is all we are asking.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has consumed 10 minutes.

Mr. DODD. I thank the Chair. I will wrap up by saying I hope we can find some common ground this week and do what the American public expects of

us. I would so much love to hear my President ask me to extend these unemployment benefits and provide health care. Presidents in the past have done it.

This President is doing a wonderful job in the battle in central Asia. All of us appreciate his work and the work of his team. I know he is occupied with that now, but we also would like him to appreciate the battle going on at home.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In my capacity as a Senator from the State of New York, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the hour of 12:30 p.m. having arrived, the Senate will stand in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon the Senate, at 12:29 p.m., recessed until 2:17 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BAYH).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina is recognized. Mr. HELMS I thank the Chair.

CONTINUATION OF AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I speak on some legislation filed by distinguished Senators relative to S. 1673 this past Friday. I am honored to join with my distinguished colleagues in offering legislation to provide the maximum flexibility and stability our farmers need to make proper business decisions based on market conditions.

I am mindful, of course, of agriculture's importance to our country's economy and to America's security. I might add that agriculture is the No. 1 industry in North Carolina. Our farmers rank third in the Nation behind California and Florida in agricultural diversification.

It is with genuine appreciation that I join Senator LINCOLN, Senator HUTCHINSON, and Senator MILLER in working together in crafting this bill. The farm bill we are introducing will be helpful in our guaranteeing that American farmers will continue to provide the American people with the safe and adequate food supply that too many take for granted.

The past several years have been a genuine challenge to farmers, whether their operations are large or small. Farmers and their families have long been the backbone of countless rural communities. Every day, farmers face new challenges by literally dozens of factors beyond their control, from weather to insect infestation, to overreaching regulations that unnecessarily increase the cost of production,