of regulations to change the underlying overtime law. They did it without having one public hearing. Imagine that, changing something so fundamental to the American work ethic as the right to overtime pay without having a public hearing.

They put out the proposed regulations and the American public responded with thousands—I have heard maybe 60,000 to 70,000 comments. Then last summer, after a number of us had gotten wind of what they were trying to do and we started reading the proposed regulations, we offered an amendment on the Senate floor that would have basically denied that part of the overtime regulation that would take away this overtime right.

That amendment I offered last summer passed the Senate. It was bipartisan. I have heard a lot of references to the fact that this bill is a bipartisan bill. Well, the amendment I am offering is a bipartisan amendment because it was voted on last summer by both Republicans and Democrats and passed in the Senate, 54 to 46. Around here, that is pretty bipartisan.

Basically, what that amendment said is, no, we are not going to agree with the administration's proposed changes on overtime rules. If the administration wants to make fundamental changes in overtime rules, they ought to do it in the time-honored manner: work with Congress, have public hearings around the country, and then let Congress and the administration get together to revise, if revision is needed, overtime laws. But that is not the way the administration did it.

Again, if I hear correctly people on the other side say we are slowing down or stopping this bill, I am sorry; it does not ring true. This bill could have been brought up last fall, and it was not. We just spent a whole week in the Senate debating a gun bill that failed with over 90 votes against it. What was that all about? Why did we spend over a week doing that when we could have been doing this bill, if this bill is so important?

One has to raise some questions about what is going on because when one reads some of the publications around here—this was in Congressional Quarterly Today about this bill. According to the Congressional Quarterly, the chairman of the House committee, Congressman THOMAS:

> . . . told the Tax Executive Institute, a group of corporate tax officials, on Monday that lobbyists seeking specific changes in international tax rules had effectively stymied his bill, according to the Associated Press.

So it is not us who are stymying this bill. Again, there are some corporate lobbyists downtown who are. Again, from CQ Today:

> Meanwhile, House Ways and Means Chairman Bill Thomas, R–California, told a group of business tax officials on Monday that the current House version of the bill (H.R. 2896) was probably doomed.

So it is not us who are slowing this bill down, not at all. This Senator would like to see this bill get through. I think there are some good things in this bill. That does not mean we should not be allowed to offer our amendments and have an up-or-down vote on those amendments.

A jobs bill? Well, fine, call it a jobs bill, but do not tell me this is a jobs bill and then say we cannot have a vote on our overtime amendment. That is about jobs. We know it is about jobs because we know, common sense dictates, if an employer can work a person longer than 40 hours a week and not have to pay overtime, why, it would be much better to work the person longer, pay them less, and then not hire any new workers.

At a time when we have 9 million Americans out of work, we have a jobless recovery in this country, why would we now be wanting to give employers another incentive not to hire new workers?

We had an agreement to consider my amendment. It was the fourth amendment in the series we agreed to prior to last week's recess, but no sooner was I able to offer my amendment last evening than the majority leadership decided to move to recommit the whole bill and to file cloture on that motion.

I am not sure how that meets our previous agreement to take up my amendment, but that is where we are now. A motion to recommit the bill is pending. I would like to talk about overtime. I would like to have an amendment about overtime and have a vote on it. As my parliamentary inquiries earlier this morning showed, we can go through this whole charade, motion to recommit, file a cloture, we can vote on that, and we can still come back with this amendment.

I suppose then they will file cloture on the bill. That is why it was wrong on the majority side to file cloture on this motion to recommit and why I hope we will oppose that cloture motion and deny cloture until we can get a right to offer our amendments and have a vote on our amendments.

We are not asking for unlimited debate. I would agree with the manager of the bill right now to a time limit on my amendment with an up-or-down vote. So it is not about us stalling this bill. Forget about that. Get that out of your head. That is not what is happening. What is happening is the majority side simply does not want to vote on overtime. Why? Because I think they are afraid, and the vote will be even stronger this time than it was last summer because more and more American workers, more and more people have found out what this administration downtown is trying to do to their overtime pay.

I will be on the floor waiting for every opportunity to offer this amendment and to get a vote on it. If the other side believes that somehow by going through this charade and slowing this bill down and somehow blaming us for it when we are not doing this is somehow going to get rid of this overtime amendment, well, I am sorry to disappoint them. We are going to continue to debate and have a vote on this overtime amendment. It is that crucial, that important, to the American worker that this Senate express itself once again and say no to the administration, that we are not going to let them trample on the rights of American workers and take away their right to overtime pay if they work over 40 hours a week.

I see my time has expired. I yield the floor.

RECESS

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

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:29 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. ALEXANDER).

JUMPSTART OUR BUSINESS STRENGTH (JOBS) ACT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the matter before the Senate is what?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The second-degree amendment by Senator GRASSLEY.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, 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.

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

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senator from Connecticut, Mr. DODD, wishes to speak for 15 minutes. I ask following that, the Senator from Massachusetts, Mr. KENNEDY, be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Nevada for securing the time. I may not need all of that time. I want to take a few minutes to express my deep concerns about the pending amendment. I am in favor of the pending amendment. My concern is that an effort will be made to somehow avoid having to vote on this critical issue, the issue of overtime pay.

First, let me commend Senator HARKIN of Iowa for being so tenacious and patient about this amendment. He has offered this proposal in the past. We carried the amendment, as I recall, in the Chamber, only to watch the matter be dispensed with and dropped in conference.

He has tried to bring up this matter before. In fact, prior to the recess period, Senator HARKIN was on the floor of this Chamber for a number of hours, trying to get a vote. I think he agreed