

1637. This is legislation, sponsored by Senator CANTWELL and myself, to extend the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation Program for another 6 months. The TEUC Program provides additional unemployment compensation benefits to individuals who have exhausted their initial eligibility without finding new employment. It covers those individuals who may find themselves out of a job, once it takes effect.

This program is absolutely critical to thousands of people in the United States of America, many of them who live in my home State of Ohio. The Congressional Budget Office recently reported that for the past 2 years, the exhaustion rate for unemployment benefits has been higher than at any time in recent history. During calendar year 2003, 43 percent of UI recipients exhausted their entitlement to regular benefits.

This is best depicted by this chart that I have here this evening. The bottom line shows the unemployment from a period of 1972 up to 2004. The top line shows the exhaustion rate of benefits. You can see during this period of time we had exhaustion in benefits, then it goes down, then we come out to the 2003-2004 area and you can see that means these people have been unemployed for a much longer period than is traditional in a recessionary period.

Many of those out there today are still in great need. They need these unemployment benefits in order to keep going, paying their mortgages, and giving them some time so they can gain new skills for the jobs that we hope are going to be available to them.

In my own State of Ohio, over 31,000 individuals have exhausted their unemployment benefits since the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation Program ended in late December. Without additional assistance, these families face severe financial difficulties until they are able to regain employment.

Many of my colleagues believe the recent declines in overall unemployment and the continuing decline in initial unemployment claims indicate there is no further need for a TEUC. Nothing could be further from the truth. As CBO's recent report indicates, long-term unemployment has actually continued to increase, even though short-term unemployment has been declining.

Part of the problem we face is that many of our assumptions regarding recessions, economic recovery, and job creation are more suited for the 1950s than the 21st century. Traditional economic analysis tells us companies lay off workers during a recession and rehire them to the same jobs during a recovery. Workers may have collected unemployment during a limited period of time, but they have not lost a job and usually return to their former workplace with no need to seek new employment.

Unfortunately, the current recession has not followed this pattern. Instead

of existing companies laying off employees and later rehiring them, many corporations have permanently eliminated positions or even gone out of business. This has particularly been hurtful in the State of Ohio, where manufacturing has been hit by international competition, litigation costs, and high energy costs. We have lost some 17.5 percent of our manufacturing jobs in the State of Ohio.

Companies like Rubbermaid, in Wayne County, Worchester, OH, one of the most successful companies that Ohio has ever had, a company that was written up in Fortune magazine, just closed down—1,200 jobs, in Worchester, OH, a small Ohio city in a small county, Wayne County. Thankfully, new companies and new types of jobs are emerging to replace those that are lost; however, many of the workers who were displaced during the recession have difficulty qualifying for these new jobs. Usually they have to retrain and it is not uncommon they have to relocate. Quite often, middle-aged factory workers find themselves competing with younger, better educated workers for jobs in the technology sector.

Also, many times jobs are lost in older urban communities, but the replacement technology or service sector jobs are created in distant suburban areas that require long commutes or changing residences. Families who are dependent on two incomes may find it difficult to locate employment for both wage earners at the same location. Consequently, either the husband or the wife may be unemployed for much longer than in previous recessions.

This is precisely the situation we are facing in Ohio. We have lost manufacturing jobs in older communities such as Youngstown and Cleveland and southeast Ohio. Most of these job losses reflect plant closings or permanent downsizing. These jobs are gone and they are not coming back. They are gone. They are finished.

Meanwhile, some areas of the State are picking up service sector jobs and have unemployment rates as low as 3.9 percent. Unfortunately, expanded financial service jobs in suburban Columbus are not much help to an unemployed tool and die maker in Toledo, OH. It is all very well to talk about the bright new economy that will generate plentiful employment at high wages for the knowledge workers of the future. However, we still have a responsibility to assist the semiskilled manual laborers being displaced by the demise of the old manufacturing economy. Many of these workers can and will retrain. Some will, however reluctantly, relocate. All of them will require time to make these changes.

Recently, Chairman Greenspan has recognized the need to extend temporary unemployment benefits. Secretary Snow has recognized the need to extend temporary unemployment benefits. Our President recognizes that we need to extend temporary unemployment benefits. It is time for Congress to extend these benefits.

The program was designed specifically to give long-term unemployed individuals the time they need to readjust to changing economic realities. The recent report from the CBO clearly indicates the continued need for this program. Consequently, I call upon my colleagues to offer a helping hand to workers from that old economy, while we welcome the rise of the new economy. We can afford to help with this transition, and it is the right thing to do.

I know there are many of my colleagues from States that do not have the problem we have in my State, and they don't understand the urgency of the passage of this legislation. I think we owe it to these people, to these families. Some of them live in my neighborhood in the city of Cleveland. I have lived in the same house since I was mayor of the city of Cleveland, since 1972. I live in a middle-class neighborhood. I have a neighbor across the street who has been unemployed and his benefits have been exhausted. He needs help. I see these people in the grocery store and they talk to me about it.

I think some of our colleagues who are opposed come from States where things are fine, things are wonderful. But I think part of the responsibility we have as Senators in the United States of America is to look after the needs of the entire country. If I were in a position where things were wonderful in my State and they weren't good in some other State and they needed some help in unemployment, then I would be supportive of that because I think it is the proper thing for us to do.

The other thing about this program that a lot of my colleagues do not understand is that, even though this money is coming from the Federal Treasury, the money ultimately is repaid back to the Treasury from the unemployment compensation fund that is supported by a tax on our businesses in our State. This happened when we had the last recession in the State of Ohio.

I am urging my colleagues to open their eyes to the pleas and the needs of so many of our fellow Americans who need that extra help at this time for themselves and for their families.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

DEMOCRACY AGAIN TRIUMPHS IN
GEORGIA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, there is good news from Georgia this morning. In a second bloodless revolution in that country, former Soviet official and Ajaria troublemaker Alan Abashidze fled into exile after thousands of opponents—including some from within his own police and military forces—took to the streets to demand change.

Abashidze's hasty departure is a great victory for the people of Georgia and their leaders, particularly President Saakashvili and Prime Minister Zhvania. By seeking a non-violent solution to the crisis in the breakaway region of Ajari, Saakashvili and Zhvania demonstrated patience in the face of Abashidze's hostile provocations—designed to spark a military conflict.

Reports of the celebrations in the streets of Batumi are inspiring, particularly those of reformers waving American flags along side their own country. I want to remind my colleagues such symbolism is a reality in Iraq, where Georgian soldiers serve alongside U.S. and Coalition forces.

My message to the people of Georgia is clear: America will continue to stand with them as they champion the cause of democracy. We will continue to help them build a country—and institutions—dedicated to the furtherance of freedom and the rule of law.

Once again, democracy triumphs in Georgia.

MILLION MOM MARCH

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, this weekend moms from across the country will converge on Washington to join in a march remembering gun violence victims and urging President Bush to support commonsense gun safety legislation. I am proud to support the moms, and I know my colleagues will join me in commending these women for their leadership.

On Mother's Day, moms will gather on the west lawn of the U.S. Capitol to bring their "Halt the Assault" message to the front door of Congress. These women have come to Washington to urge Members of Congress to support sensible gun safety legislation. Their leadership is desperately needed on this issue, and I applaud all of the moms who will make this journey for their commitment. After the march, the moms will spend Monday visiting our offices and urging us to support commonsense gun safety legislation.

One of the moms attending this Sunday's events is Barb Case, Michigan's Million Mom March President. Mrs. Case has been a member of the Michigan Million Mom March since it first started in 2000. She will be leading as many as 500 Michigan moms to Washington. The Michigan moms will be marching in memory of the 120,000 people who have been killed by a firearm,

including more than 13,000 children and teens, since 2000. Mrs. Case, along with other moms in Michigan, have united with State and local leaders to implement community efforts to address the tough issues surrounding gun violence in my home State of Michigan. And, Barb has organized Michigan's moms trip to Washington every year since the first march took place in 2000.

This year's marchers are focused on the renewal and strengthening of the assault weapons ban, holding gun manufacturers accountable for their products, requiring background checks on all gun purchases, reinstating the 5-day Brady waiting period for all gun purchases, and incorporating safety standards into gun design.

Michigan's moms, just like millions of moms from across the country want an America where their kids are safe from gun violence. Again, I commend all of the mothers coming to Washington this weekend for their hard work and commitment to the issue of gun safety and I hope all of my colleagues will remember these efforts when the Senate considers gun safety legislation in the coming months.

I ask unanimous consent that an article from the Detroit Free Press, which discussed the issue of gun violence and this Sunday's march, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Detroit Free Press, Apr. 29, 2004]

WORK TOWARD PEACE THIS MOTHER'S DAY
(By Desiree Cooper)

Sometimes, society's assault on your humanity can be so fierce, you have to throw down the gauntlet and say, "This means war."

That's what happened to two women more than 140 years ago. One was Anna Reeves Jarvis, a West Virginia Methodist pastor's wife. She established Mother's Day Work Clubs to improve the health of Appalachian women and children. But as Civil War casualties mounted, she converted the clubs into nursing squads, determined to save the lives of all soldiers—both Confederate and Union.

Abolitionist Julia Ward Howe, author of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," also had become war-weary. When the Franco-Prussian War began on the heels of the Civil War, she started rallying women for a national Mother's Day for Peace. Together, the nurse and the poet began the antiwar holiday that we know as Mother's Day.

NOT ABOUT DAISIES AND DINNER

We've long since forgotten that Mother's Day was a social movement. But this year, Endolyn Chapman and her daughter Tonisha will hark back to the roots of the holiday and celebrate it on May 9 at the Million Mom March in Washington, DC.

Neither woman has ever seen herself as political. Tonisha, 19, just registered to vote last week. But, like Jarvis and Howe, violence has spurred their fight for peace.

"The last time I saw my father, he was driving away as I was coming home," said Tonisha, remembering the even on April 5, 2004. "I wanted to stop and chat with him, but he just waved and drove off."

That night, 44-year old Steven Chapman went to Detroit's Sa-Mari Hand Car Wash on Wyoming and 6 Mile.

"Four men wearing ski masks robbed the place," said Endolyn, who'd been married to Chapman—a former college football player who stood 6 feet 6 and wore a size 18 shoe—for nearly 20 years. "My husband pleaded for his life. He was in a seated position when they killed him."

HOW WILL YOU COMMIT FOR PEACE?

Tonisha has tried to comfort her mother, taking her out on her parents' anniversary. Endolyn, too, has tried to move on, even though her husband's killers remain at large.

Then she read an article about the Million Mom March's Halt the Assault rally to urge Congress to renew the assault weapons ban.

"There is no reason why anyone would need an assault weapon," Endolyn said. "You can't hunt with one. I decided that we'd go to the march because we don't ever want another family to go through what we've been through."

Million Man Marchstate president Barb Case said, "So many women have been touched by the suffering of others and want to do something to change the world." She estimated that about 500 people from Michigan will attend the march. "This is a powerful way for them to get involved."

And what better day to demonstrate that power than Mother's Day.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, tens of thousands of women will come to Washington this Mother's Day weekend to spread the word about the urgent need to renew the Federal assault weapons ban.

I thank these women, and their families and friends who will join them, for their effort to focus the American public on the fact that we could lose this important law unless Congress and the President renew the ban soon.

I ask these committed Americans to do everything they can do to help save the assault weapons ban. They should write the President and urge him to help renew the ban. They should write Senate Majority Leader BILL FRIST and Speaker of the House DENNIS HASTERT and urge them to bring the assault weapons ban up for a vote. They should make their voices heard until the ban is renewed.

Time is running out. The Federal assault weapons ban will expire on September 13 of this year if Congress and the President do not act. This means that AK-47s, TEC-DC 9s, Street Sweepers, and dozens of other types of military-style assault weapons will once again flood the streets of America. We cannot afford to let this happen. We owe the American people more than that. It is just that simple.

Assault weapons pose a grave threat to all Americans, but most especially to law enforcement officers on our city streets.

Just last month, I spoke at the funeral of San Francisco Police Officer Isaac Espinoza, who was shot and killed by a gang member armed with an AK-47 and a 30-round clip. Officer Espinoza took three shots in his back as a gunman fired 15 rounds in just seconds, giving Officer Espinoza and his partner, who was also shot, no time to seek refuge.