

lasting economic impact. It is important to leave behind a record that you are proud of, but it is also maybe even more important to leave behind many fond memories of that work, fond memories of colleagues with whom you were able to spend time and, of course, fond memories of the friendships you were able to form, both with members of your own party and with those on the other side of the aisle.

Perhaps what I am most proud of overall is that the pieces of legislation I was able to sponsor and pass, whether it was the Internet tax ban, civil liberties protection that we added under the PATRIOT Act, the Wilderness Act that protects 25,000 acres of the White Mountain National Forest, were all bipartisan pieces of legislation. That means a lot to me.

I think it will serve me well in any future endeavors I undertake in public service. I thank Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, let me just say to my friend from New Hampshire, it has been a real privilege to serve with somebody of your intellect and ability. I know you are going to be a huge success. You have, as we discussed, a lot of your life left. I know you are going to be a huge success in the coming years, and I am looking forward to seeing more of you in the future.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST—
S. 3684

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of a bill I have at the desk which is the text of title VII of S. 3689 regarding the auto sales tax deduction, and further that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SUNUNU. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. MIKULSKI. It is my understanding I still have the floor?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has the floor.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Boy, am I sorry that is the last act of JOHN SUNUNU in the Senate. I hope it is not the last thing. I feel so badly about people objecting to me bringing this up. Mine is a bipartisan bill that I thought maybe I would win, maybe I would lose, but at least we could bring it up and debate it and discuss it and vote on it.

My bill was a straight-forward bill. My bill was to help save jobs in the automobile industry, from manufacturing, sales to service, to the little people who are the bookkeepers in our communities.

My bill would give a tax deduction to someone who would buy a car in these

6 weeks and they would be able to take a deduction of interest and sales tax. The total cost of my bill was \$8 billion. But the cost of not doing my bill is going to be horrific. It is going to be absolutely horrific. I cannot get over how these economic conservatives have their ostrich heads in the quicksand of our economy.

You know what is going to happen when our automobile industry goes down. Well, let them go. Well, I will tell you, we are going to lose \$156 billion over the next 3 years in lost taxes, unemployment, and health care assistance.

We are facing the possibility that 3 million people could lose their jobs. But oh, no, we object. We object to debate. We object to discussion. We object to taking our ideas and putting them into the sunshine and being able to do what I thought you do in a democracy, vote ideas up or down.

If I lose my bill in a vote, that is the way democracy works. But to move it through a parliamentary maneuver of something called, "I object," I object to the objection. I have no idea why anyone would object to bringing up an idea that has bipartisan support to see if we could stimulate demand in the automobile industry.

Well, I tell you what. Senator BARB MIKULSKI is not the only one who objects. The American people object. And that is what they did when they walked into that voting booth on November 4 and voted for change. They said: Yes, we can. They were objecting to what goes on in this institution and what has been going on in the White House for the last 8 years.

They said: I object. And they voted. They objected and then they voted. And they object by their vote. There is a reason a political tsunami hit this institution. It is because of this continual way of throwing sand in the gears of democracy. So they said: I object. That is what the people said.

So we can go through these parliamentary shenanigans. We can delay what we could do in the next 48 hours to get our economy going. But, oh, no.

We are going to do it. The question is, are we going to do it today or are we going to do it 8 weeks from today? The longer we wait, the deeper and more prolonged the recession will be. Right now we could begin to not only turn the page but begin to turn the economy around.

So those are the rules of the Senate. I signed up for the Senate, so I take the rules as they are. But I will tell you, I stand with the American people. I object. And I object to the objection. I am going to keep fighting this until we leave. It is my view we shouldn't leave until we pass legislation to get this economy going. If we cannot do it this week, come back next week because the real turkeys will not be in our oven. The real turkeys will be close at hand.

I yield the floor.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST—
S. 3656

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I inform the Republican leader, I had arranged to do a unanimous-consent request when the Senator from Iowa could be on the floor.

I ask unanimous consent the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 3656, the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration, the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I reserve the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, throughout the years, the Committee on Finance has worked to safeguard and improve the programs under its jurisdiction, including the Medicare and Medicaid Programs. The Finance Committee has a unique expertise on these programs and is the only committee in a position to assess the possible effects of individual changes on all Social Security programs as a whole. Accordingly, it is essential that any legislative proposals impacting these programs be considered by the full Senate only after the Finance Committee conducts a thorough analysis of the issues involved and the potential solutions.

I would like to bring up one example of how this bill needs scrutiny. There is a provision buried in here that would allow California to escape its responsibilities to ensure that illegal aliens are not getting Medicaid benefits to which they are not entitled. Do the American people support giving Medicaid to illegal aliens? I don't think so. Simply bypassing the committee process with legislation on complex issues runs contrary to how this body should function. In fact, as my friend from New York is aware, Congress already had extensive debate and enacted a Medicare bill already earlier this year. That bill was authored by the chairman of the Finance Committee. So the Senate and the full Congress have already had extensive Medicare debate this year. The Senator from New York, as a member of the Finance Committee, had ample opportunity to raise the issues earlier this year that he now raises in a bill he wants to bring up right now. So regardless of the merits of the Senator's proposal, I believe that ship has set sail.

I have a more extensive statement on the provisions themselves. Some of them, I want the Senator from New York to understand, I actually support, and I oppose some, obviously. Perhaps we can work together on some of these issues where we agree, if the Senator is interested. Today, however, I am forced to object to the Senator's consent request.

Notwithstanding the significant jurisdictional and process issues I just