

By and large, those in the minority have shown, so far, far too little interest in working with us. More important, they have shown far too little interest in working on the interests of their constituents.

Mr. President, I called my office early this morning and asked my faithful assistant, Janice Shelton, to arrange a call for me to talk to the new, soon-to-be Senator from Massachusetts, SCOTT BROWN. I look forward to visiting with him. I look forward to welcoming him to the Senate and asking him that he work with us. It is certainly a conversation I look forward to.

I hope in this new year we will resolve to leave partisan political motivation behind. I hope we will share and renew the motivation to get to work, to legislate for the good of this country.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### SCOTT BROWN VICTORY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, first, I welcome everyone back after what I hope was a restful time away from Washington. It is good to be here. I can assure everyone that Republicans are energized and eager to pick up where we left off. There is a lot to do, and we are ready.

The news of the day, of course, is that we will soon be welcoming a new Senator into our ranks. It has been a long time—a very long time—since the people of Massachusetts sent a Republican to the Senate. So I congratulate Senator-elect SCOTT BROWN on his decisive victory last night.

I had a chance to speak with him last night. I think it was truly a remarkable turnout and decision on the part of the people of that State.

There is a reason the Nation was focused on this race. The American people have made it abundantly clear they are more interested in shrinking unemployment than expanding government. They are tired of bailouts. They are tired of government spending more than ever at a time when most people are spending less. They do not want the government taking over health care. They made that abundantly clear last night in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

This is why Americans are electing good Republican candidates who they hope will reverse a year-long Democratic trend of spending too much, borrowing too much, and taxing too much. The voters have spoken. They want a course correction. We should listen to them.

Today, we will have a chance to show we have gotten the message when we take up legislation that would raise the national debt limit. The reason we are being asked to raise the limit on

the national credit card is clear. It is because the majority has spent the past year spending money we do not have on stimulus bills that do not stimulate the economy, on budgets that double the debt in 5 years and triples it in 10. We need to move in a new direction—a dramatically new direction. That is the message of Virginia. That is the message of New Jersey. That is the message of Massachusetts.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business for 1 hour, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees and with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

#### HEALTH CARE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, Massachusetts voters yesterday sent a clear message that the Democratic majority in Congress is not in touch with the American people and that we ought to restart the health care debate.

Senator-elect SCOTT BROWN's independent voice will provide a much needed check and balance to a Congress that has become dominated by more taxes, more spending, and more cash takeovers. Nothing demonstrates that need more than the so-called health care reform bill, a 2,700-page attempt to remodel 17 percent of the American economy that was concocted in secret, presented to the Senate over the weekend before Christmas during the worst snowstorm in years, voted on in the middle of the night, and passed 5 days later, on Christmas Eve, without one single Republican vote.

Now that the people have spoken in Massachusetts, we should abandon these arrogant notions of trying to turn our entire health care system upside down all at once and, instead, set a clear goal of reducing health care costs and then work together, step by step, to re-earn the trust of the American people—an approach Republican Senators urged exactly 173 different times on the floor of the Senate during last year.

If you will examine the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, you will find that Republican Senators have been proposing a step-by-step approach to confronting our Nation's challenges 173 different times during 2009. On health care, we first suggested setting a clear goal: reducing costs. Then we proposed the first six steps toward achieving that

goal: one, allowing small businesses to pool their resources to purchase health plans; two, reducing junk lawsuits against doctors; three, allowing the purchase of insurance across State lines; four, expanding health savings accounts; five, promoting wellness and prevention; and, six, taking steps to reduce waste, fraud, and abuse.

We offered these 6 proposals in complete legislative text totaling 182 pages. The Democratic majority rejected all six and ridiculed the approach, in part, because our approach was not comprehensive.

A good place to restart the health care debate would be to abandon plans to send a huge bill to States—that is, every State except Nebraska—to pay for Medicaid expansion. The 60 Senators who voted for this so-called health care reform legislation ought to be sentenced to go home and serve as Governor for two terms to try to pay for it because what these Senators would find is that States are broke, and there will either be higher State taxes or higher college tuition or both to pay for what the Democratic Governor of Tennessee has called “the mother of all unfunded mandates.”

That mandate arrogantly expands Medicaid and, to help pay for it, would send a 3-year, \$25 billion bill to Governors who, in turn, will send the bill to State taxpayers and then to college students. That is akin to your big-spending Uncle Sam hiring someone to paint your house and then sending the bill to you, even though you told Uncle Sam you already spent all your available money sending your kid to college. Of course, Uncle Sam does not have to balance its budget and you do.

I speak today not just as a Senator but as a former Governor worried about our States and as a former president of a great public university worried about our college students, many of whom are seeking an education to get a job.

Washington policies are turning our Federal constitutional system upside down. They are transforming autonomous State governments into bankrupt wards of the central government. In doing so, they are making it harder for States to support public higher education; therefore, damaging its quality and damaging the opportunity for Americans to afford it.

Governor Schwarzenegger of California said:

With a \$19 billion deficit, the last thing we need is another \$3 billion bill for Medicaid.

At the University of California, students are paying a 32-percent tuition increase. Why? Because, according to the New York Times, “the University of California now receives only half as much support from the State per student as it did in 1990.”

Why is that? Because when Governors make up their budgets, it usually comes down to a choice between exploding Medicaid costs and higher education, and Medicaid, hopelessly entangled with expensive Washington policies and mandates, usually wins.