

Shelby	Thune	Webb
Snowe	Udall (CO)	Whitehouse
Specter	Udall (NM)	Wicker
Stabenow	Voivovich	Wyden
Tester	Warner	

NOT VOTING—13

Begich	Landrieu	Sessions
Brownback	LeMieux	Shaheen
Gillibrand	Mikulski	Vitter
Hagan	Murkowski	
Kohl	Roberts	

The nomination was confirmed. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session. The Senator from Ohio.

EXTENSION OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the extension of unemployment benefits, something we talked about 2 weeks ago before we left town. It is something we talked about the week before that and the week before that. There has been a lot of talk, and there has been continued opposition from Senate Republicans.

I am incredulous that we have seen week after week after week—it has been 41 days since the Congress let unemployment insurance lapse. It was on June 4, 41 days ago. It is not because a lot of us didn't want to see it happen. It is because of an obscure—less obscure to the public than it was—60-vote rule. The Republicans did not just oppose the unemployment benefits extension—there are a couple of Republicans who voted for it, but of the 41 Republicans there was overwhelming opposition, virtually 90 percent of them—it is not just that they voted no. Let them vote no. They actually filibustered. They actually blocked us from even voting on the extension of unemployment benefits.

It is unfair to the unemployed who face a difficult job market through no fault of their own, and it is bad economics. We know Senator MCCAIN, Presidential candidate MCCAIN's economic adviser, among others, pointed out that money going out for the extension of unemployment benefits actually stimulates the economy better than any other dollars going into the economy. The money that goes to an unemployed teacher or an unemployed steelworker or an unemployed clerk or an unemployed computer programmer is money that is spent almost immediately because they have bills they have to pay. That money goes right into the community. We see a multiplier effect.

When the humanitarian response is to extend unemployment benefits, and the best economic policy response is to extend unemployment benefits, most of

my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—39 out of 41 of them, I believe—have voted no.

June unemployment was 9.5 percent. We know a year and a half ago 700,000 Americans lost their jobs; 700,000 Americans lost their jobs the month that Barack Obama became President. Things are better now. We are seeing job increases. In April, in Ohio, we had the biggest job increase of any State in the country: 37,000 new jobs. But that is not close to dealing with the unemployment brought on by the economic policies of deregulating Wall Street, cutting taxes for the rich, and not paying for anything—the war, the tax cuts, the bailouts to the drug and insurance companies in the name of privatizing Medicare.

Never before has Congress cut off benefits when unemployment was so high. Until recently, it has always been a bipartisan extension of unemployment benefits. Overwhelming numbers of Republicans and Democrats voted to extend unemployment benefits. I just keep trying to explain to my colleagues who vote no on the unemployment benefits extension that this is not welfare, this is insurance. People pay into the unemployment insurance fund and get benefits when they lose their jobs. At the same time, nobody gets these benefits unless they actively seek work; unless they are sending out resumes, doing interviews, going and visiting businesses, employers, whatever they can do to try to find jobs. Yet the Republicans continue to deny the extension for unemployment benefits.

Our workers deserve more than this crass political gamesmanship that an overwhelming number of Republican Senators are playing. July 1 was one of the busiest days ever at the Summit County Department of Jobs and Family Services. It was the first of the month, and because of Republican obstructionism—because they voted not just against extending unemployment benefits, they voted to filibuster our even considering these extension of benefits—because it was the first of the month and because of Republican obstructionism, this body failed to extend unemployment benefits. Staff members at the Summit County Department of Jobs and Family Services typically assist 300 to 400 clients a day. On July 1 twice that number were served by midday, and four times that number were seen by the close of business.

So a typical day of 300 or 400, 300-plus clients at the Summit County Jobs and Family Services turned into 600 before midday, and 1,200 by the close of business. The staff at the Department of Jobs and Family Services in Akron, led by Ms. Pat Divokey and County Executive Russ Pry, is doing everything they can to help working middle-class Ohioans. But when 90,000 Ohioans across the State are in need of an extension of unemployment benefits—90,000 people—it is time for this body to step up. Ninety thousand is a lot of people. It is almost hard to imagine.

I think what is important is to think about these 90,000 as individual human beings. I wish to share a handful of letters I received from Ohioans—just three of them—to put a human face on this issue. It is incredible to me to think about this many people who are so unsure whether they are going to have any money to feed their kids, to pay their mortgage and their utility bills in the weeks ahead because of the 60-vote rule, and this body has not been able to extend unemployment benefits because of a Republican filibuster.

Let me read a letter from Judith of Franklin County. It is the county where Columbus is located, the State capital.

I am very disappointed that the unemployment extension has not passed. I was laid off after working in my job for 20 years. I have a bachelor's degree and a master's degree and I have worked for 35 years since I graduated. I have never been without a job until now.

I understand the growing budget deficit, but what are working people supposed to do when we can't find a job?

These are not people who don't want to work. Whether they are in Albuquerque or Santa Fe or whether they are in Truth or Consequences, these are people who want to go to work. They are people who have worked their whole lives and are used to showing up to work. They can't find jobs. I hear this prattle from the other side of the aisle that this is some kind of welfare scheme. It is not. These people want to work. Most people who are filing for unemployment are people who, No. 1, have worked for years and, No. 2, continue to search for a job; they cannot get an unemployment extension unless they do.

The second letter is from Pat from the Mahoning Valley, in the Youngstown area:

I am a 25-year veteran of the accounting industry, but I was recently laid off.

My employers have paid into the federal and state unemployment funds for me for those 25 years that I worked.

And now for the first time I need to collect those benefits until I secure new employment.

While Congress plays political games, I have bills to pay and work to find.

Mr. President, he points out exactly this. He works in the accounting industry. He understands it. He understands that it is good economics to extend these unemployment benefits to people who lost their jobs, and he understands fundamentally that for the 25 years he worked for this accounting firm or for a number of accounting firms—I don't know whether Pat is a man or a woman, so he or she was paying—Pat's employer was paying into this insurance fund. So it is not welfare, in spite of what my Republican colleagues say.

You know, the other thing that is absolutely amazing in what Pat said and what Judith said about the growing budget deficit—the Presiding Officer was in the House of Representatives for several years representing a district in northern New Mexico. He saw year