

the White House was back last August saying they needed another \$26 billion right away or else 160,000 teachers would get pink slips and police and firefighters across the country would literally be off the job. What happened then? Well, the States got another bailout. The unemployment rate didn't budge. And now the President is riding around on a bus saying that if they don't get another one, teachers, police, and firefighters will lose their jobs again.

Does anybody notice a pattern? We have been doing this for nearly 3 years now—3 years. It doesn't work as advertised. Bailouts don't solve the problem. In fact, they perpetuate it. Yet all we get from the President and Democrats in Congress is do it again, do it again, or else.

We have been mired in a jobs crisis for 3 long years now, and all the Democrats ever want to do is throw more taxpayer money at it. It never works the way they claim it will. Yet they want to keep on doing it—with other people's money. Just throw another bailout together, slap the word "jobs" on the cover page, and dare people to vote against it. That is, apparently, the Democrats' governing philosophy—3 years into this jobs crisis. It would not be irresponsible to oppose an approach such as this; it would be irresponsible to consider it. It didn't work the first time. It didn't work the second time. The third time won't be a charm. That is why Republicans and a growing number of our Democratic friends want a different approach. There is a growing bipartisan opposition to trying the same failed policies again.

There is bipartisan opposition to raising taxes, especially at a time when 14 million Americans are out of work. If there is one thing we should agree on now, it is that we should be making it easier for businesses to hire, not harder. So the President should drop his obsession with raising taxes, and if he really wants to create jobs, maybe he should consider doing something different.

We have tried the bailout approach. We have tried more regulations, more debt, and more taxes. Why don't we try a new idea for a change, one that has bipartisan support, one that isn't a two-time proven failure? Let's try something that might actually work because the American people didn't send us here to kick our problems down the road. They certainly didn't send us here to repeat the same mistakes over and over and then stick them and their children with the tab. That might be how you maintain a sense of urgency—by failing to solve the problem the first two times around—but it is not how you solve a jobs crisis. The American people simply deserve better than this. They deserve better than the false promises they have been getting.

The President got everything he wanted from a Democratic Congress for 2 years—everything he wanted: a

health care law designed to take over one-sixth of the entire economy; a financial reform bill that punishes businesses that had nothing to do with the financial crisis; out-of-control regulations that are forcing otherwise healthy businesses to shut down, businesses such as Smart Papers in Hamilton, OH, a paper mill that said last week it is shutting down because of onerous new Federal regulations that make it too costly to do business; and a trillion-dollar stimulus that was supposed to solve the jobs crisis 2½ years ago.

For 2 years, when the President said: Pass this bill right away, Democrats did it. Here is what they got, despite all that: trillions in debt and more than 1½ million fewer jobs. And that is after the President got everything he wanted for 2 whole years. We don't need any more of that. We can't afford more of the same.

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, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ addressed the Chair.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator yield for a unanimous consent request?

Mr. MENENDEZ. Yes.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak following the remarks of the Senator from New Jersey.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

JOBS-TEACHERS/FIRST RESPONDERS BACK TO WORK ACT

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I rise as the lead sponsor of the Teachers/First Responders Back to Work Act. I rise in favor of jobs, in favor of teachers, in favor of police officers and firefighters, keeping our communities safe, and the promise we made to first responders after September 11.

We have a choice. I listened to the distinguished Republican leader, but it is interesting how history can be viewed through different lenses. What I failed to hear were the challenges this President and this country inherited from 8 years of policies that led us, in 2008, to the verge not of the great recession we had been referring to but on

the verge of a new depression, where the Chairman of the Federal Reserve and the former Secretary of the Treasury, under President Bush, came before Members of Congress and said: We have a series of financial institutions on the verge of collapse, and if they collapse, it will create systemic risk to the entire country's economy, and every American will feel the consequences of that.

The result of that 8 years of largely unregulated process created excesses where large entities made decisions that ultimately became the collective responsibility of everybody in this country because a failure to have met those responsibilities would have meant a collapse of this country.

Now, there are those in the Senate who are advocating we go back to those very policies. They talk about stopping each and every regulation. Those regulations ultimately—the lack of it and the lack of enforcement of it is what gave us the excesses we had.

Additionally, we had the two wars abroad, which are totally unpaid for, and fiscal responsibility went out the window there. Tax cuts were totally unpaid for, and fiscal responsibility went out the window there.

The culmination of all of that brought us to January of 2009, when the new President took office and had already inherited millions of jobs that had been lost prior to then. Around 7.5 percent unemployment was the starting point already. In the first quarter of 2009, before he could even do anything—he took the oath of office in late January, swore in a cabinet in February, and sent a plan up in March—another 2 million jobs were lost.

I find it interesting how we forget all of that, at least as a starting point.

We have had 19 months of private sector growth—a little over 2 million jobs. That is good news. But where we have been shedding many jobs is in the very essence of those in the public sector who teach our children, who prepare for the next generation and the competitive future of America, and who protect our communities—police officers, who protect us from crime, and firefighters, who respond when there is an emergency in our communities.

With the Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act, we can fulfill our duty to educate our children and keep our communities safe or we can gamble our future on the political games we have seen here that disinvest in the future of our children and the safety of our communities.

Almost 300,000 education jobs are on the chopping block this year in this country. At a time when other countries in the world are increasing their educational workforce, we are in the process of decreasing it. New Jersey, my home State, is facing a \$10.5 billion shortfall in its 2012 budget. That means more cuts in State and local spending for education, and that hurts our children.