

would say, no, I need to get out and take my “public opinion baths”—I need to see the people and talk to them and understand their problems.

Pope Francis recently exhorted his parish priests to go smell like the flock, obviously using the allegory of the sheep in the Old Testament and New Testament, but also saying to his parish priests: Understand how people live, talk to them about their issues and their problems and their lives and live among them as much as you can, something perhaps none of us in this body—I know the Presiding Officer from Vermont possibly does more townhalls and meetings with people than anybody in the Senate. All of us need to do that more to understand better.

But as we debate the extension of unemployment benefits, \$500 a week is the average benefit; 52,000 people in my State were cut off from benefits at the end of the year, tens of thousands more will lose their benefits if we don't act. It is not just what this means to parents so they can feed their families and continue to look for work. But as the Presiding Officer knows, they need to continue to look for work in order to get this \$300 a week on average. We also know it helps the economy.

One hundred years ago this week, Henry Ford made an announcement that stunned the country. He said: Everybody in my auto plant is going to receive \$5 a day. Whether it was the young man sweeping the floor or the autoworker, they were all going to receive \$5 a day.

Whether it was done out of generosity or not, what Henry Ford knew was putting money in workers' pockets—just the same as when you put money in people's pockets for unemployment benefits, which is the insurance they paid into—the money that they get will help grow the economy. It will help people be able to do things they would not otherwise be able to do. That is the importance of the extension of unemployment benefits, and that is the importance of passing minimum wage legislation, which Senator HARKIN also spoke about.

The fair minimum wage would raise the minimum wage 90 cents upon the signature of the President, 90 cents a year later, and 90 cents a year after that. At the same time it would raise the subminimum wage for those people who work in diners, push wheelchairs in airports, and for valets in restaurants. Those workers often make less than the minimum wage. The subminimum wage—the tipped wage—is only \$2.13 an hour. It hasn't been raised since 1991.

The Harkin, Sanders, Brown—and others who are part of this legislation on the minimum wage bill—legislation will increase the tipped minimum wage over time up to 70 percent of the real minimum wage.

I will close with a letter from Karen in Columbus. She said:

I had to come out of medical retirement because I couldn't make ends meet.

I have now worked at a department store for four years and still don't make \$9.00 an hour. My salary goes entirely towards rent and utilities.

My water bill just went up \$8.00—

For those of us in this Chamber, if the water bill goes up \$8, you deal with it. It is not that big of a deal. She is not even making \$9 an hour. The increase in her water bill is 1 hour of pay at this department store.

My water bill just went up \$8.00—as it goes up every year—just like the electric, food, and gas.

Heaven forbid my car would break down or I would fall victim to a serious illness.

I hope that our colleagues are getting their public opinion baths. I hope our colleagues are out among people listening to these stories.

I close, again with a quote from President Johnson's speech in Athens, OH, which was 50 years ago this year.

Poverty hides its face behind a mask of affluence. But I call upon you to help me get out there and unmask it, take that mask off of that face of affluence and let the world see what we have, and let the world do something about it.

We have an opportunity today to do something about unemployment insurance and help people get back on their feet. We have an opportunity in the months ahead to raise the minimum wage. To restore it to something close to what it was back in 1968 in real buying power, that should be our obligation, our duty, and our mission in the months ahead.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business until 6:30 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. BROWN. I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized for such time as I may consume in morning business.

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

GLOBAL WARMING

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, it is a little bit humorous to me that we are talking about extending unemployment benefits in the midst of one of the most intense cold fronts in American history. I saw one newscaster yesterday who said: If you are under 40, you have not seen this stuff before. It has

to make everyone question—and I am going to tie this together—whether global warming was ever real.

While I know the leftwing media is giving me a hard time for talking about my opposition to the administration's global warming policies when it gets cold outside, I think it is important to point out two things. No. 1, the administration is intentionally ignoring the most recent science around global warming, and No. 2, global warming policies costing between \$300 billion and \$400 billion a year, along with the rest of the EPA's environmental regulations, are resulting in millions of job losses.

We are talking about extending unemployment benefits, yet it is really jobs we need, and the jobs are being robbed from us by the overregulation that is taking place in the Environmental Protection Agency, and of course, the crown jewel of all of those is cap and trade. When I say \$300 billion to \$400 billion a year, that would constitute the largest tax increase in American history.

I find that sometimes when we are talking about these large numbers—and I am sure the Presiding Officer agrees with this—it is hard to relate that to everyday people, to our own States, and to how it affects our families. So at the end of each year I get the total number of families in my State of Oklahoma who filed a Federal tax return and I do the math. In this case, it would cost about \$3,000 for each family in my State of Oklahoma to pay this tax, this cap-and-trade tax that supposedly will stop us from having global warming.

It is interesting that people now realize this would not stop it. Even if we did something in the United States, it wouldn't affect overall emissions of CO₂, and that is what we are talking about. That is what makes global warming so important to mention as we debate the extension of unemployment benefits.

If we want to improve our employment figures, what we need to do is stop the onslaught of environmental regulations that have come out during this Obama Presidency.

First, let's talk about the global warming issue. It is interesting that we have often seen global warming related to events affected by unseasonable or unusually cold weather. Often, this has occurred whenever Al Gore has been involved in an event. Let me give a couple of examples. In January of 2004, Al Gore held a global warming rally in New York City. It turned out to be what would go down as one of the coldest days in the history of New York City. Three years later, in October of 2007, Al Gore gave a big global warming speech at Harvard University, and it coincided with temperatures that nearly broke Boston's 125-year-old temperature record.

In March of 2009, Speaker of the House NANCY PELOSI was snowed out of a global warming rally in Washington,