

President's call for TPA renewal. TPA is one of the few issues where both parties can and should be able to work together to achieve a common goal.

I know that I, along with my Republican colleagues, stand ready and willing to work with the administration to approve TPA as soon as possible. I think I have a reputation of working across the aisle and bringing people together. This is one I want to bring people together on—and I shouldn't even have to argue about it, but I do.

I believe the bipartisan bill Chairman BAUCUS and I recently introduced to renew TPA would receive strong bipartisan support in the Senate if it were allowed to come up for a vote. Indeed, I am confident that the vast majority of my colleagues would join me in supporting the bill, both Democrats and Republicans.

The problem is Republicans are not in the majority in the Senate. It is the Democrats who control the agenda. Unfortunately, the President's call to renew TPA does not appear to be a priority for some of the Democrats, certainly the leadership of the Democrats.

The question is, Will Senate Democrats work with the President on this issue? I don't know the answer to that question, but I have to say that things don't look very good to me. Instead of robust support for the President and his trade agenda, the response we have seen from some Democrats has ranged from awkward silence on TPA to outright hostility. Needless to say, I am extremely disappointed by this.

The issue is fairly simple. If we want to grow our economy through trade, Congress must approve TPA and do so soon. The President can play a unique and key role. By forcefully advocating for TPA renewal, he can help turn some of the skeptics in his party around.

Recently, the Financial Times published a powerful editorial which outlined the need for TPA and the role the President must play for TPA to succeed.

According to the editorial:

Twenty years ago, President Bill Clinton pulled out all the stops to push through approval of the controversial North American Free Trade Agreement with Mexico and Canada. He was able to squeak through a narrow victory by deft lobbying of lawmakers and a willingness to make a strong case for globalization to the American public. Mr. Obama is lagging behind his predecessor on both counts. The case for TTIP and TPP are both strong. The time for Mr. Obama to make these arguments has arrived. He has every incentive to succeed. Failure to secure [TPA] would be a grievous blow to his presidency.

I understand there are some powerful critical forces that leave some of my friends on the other side of the aisle to oppose international trade. However, let's be clear: If we fail to approve TPA, we will be doing our Nation and our economy a great disservice. International trade is good for our country. It is one of the few tools Congress has to grow our economy that does not add

to the Federal deficit. As I mentioned, Senator BAUCUS and I, along with Chairman CAMP, have negotiated and introduced a bipartisan, bicameral TPA bill. It is, in my opinion, the only TPA bill that stands a chance of getting passed in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have a choice. They can either work with the Republicans to pass our bill and empower our country to complete these important trade agreements, or they can throw up more roadblocks and cast more uncertainty on the President's trade agenda.

As I stated, Republicans stand ready to work with President Obama on these issues and to help these trade negotiations to succeed. For the sake of our country and our economy, I sincerely hope my Democratic colleagues and friends in the Senate are willing to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, I come to the floor to discuss the recent report by the Congressional Budget Office, the CBO, which contains updated estimates of the insurance coverage provisions of the Affordable Care Act, also known as ObamaCare.

It was just on Sunday the President told Bill O'Reilly of Fox News—in front of all America on Super Bowl Sunday—that his health care bill is working. Today, the Congressional Budget Office has changed that tune. We learned from the report that ObamaCare will now cost us \$2 trillion. People may recall President Obama told the country his bill would cost less than \$1 trillion. We also learned that we are expected to lose—expected to lose—2.5 million full-time jobs over the next 10 years. Finally, the CBO says exchange subsidies under the ACA will reduce incentives to work.

Let me go over that again. President Obama told the country his bill would cost less than \$1 trillion. Now the CBO says it will be \$2 trillion. We are expected to lose 2.5 million full-time jobs over next 10 years. Finally, CBO says exchange subsidies under the ACA will reduce incentives to work.

If this is working, what does "broken" mean to this President?

As I am reading this report and accompanying reaction, the most recent updates sound hauntingly familiar. In fact, I believe this is something that I and my colleagues spoke about every day during the debate on health care reform. We questioned at that time whether the CBO estimates accurately reflected the impact of ObamaCare on the American people, which leads to why I am on the floor as of this evening. This is about accountability, folks.

During the debate, we questioned whether the scoring done by the CBO was fraught with gimmicks or an unrealistic belief that Medicare would achieve significant savings in the future.

I have serious concerns with the accuracy of the scoring done on ObamaCare and its portrayal of the impact of this legislation versus the stated benefits for the American people.

We cannot keep doing this. There are people's lives at stake, people's lives that we are dealing with. The CBO projections during the health care reform debate seemed to significantly underestimate the negative impact of ObamaCare. Because of those projections, supporters were able to jam it through—one vote, everybody knows about that vote—and now the American people have to pick up the tab on the CBO's errors.

I am calling for hearings in the Finance Committee, upon which I sit, to demand CBO come before the committee and explain to the Congress and the American people why and how its scores, which led to the passage of ObamaCare, did not tell the whole story. This is about accountability for past actions, and we must ask the question, the difficult question, an unfortunate question: Was this political? Were the books cooked?

CBO needs to take the responsibility for the differences between their projections and the most recent updates just released as of this morning. We must have accurate estimates on the costs and benefits of the legislation so we can do our jobs. This shouldn't be about politics or gaming the system. This is about people's lives, and it is our responsibility to get that right. Let the hearings begin. Let the CBO provide answers. The CBO must answer this Congress and America.

I yield back the remainder of my time, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

PROTECTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, on December 22, 2004, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring the beginning of a second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. As we enter the final year of this international campaign we should remind ourselves of the importance of protecting indigenous populations and take stock of what has