

workers to make these catchup contributions under current law if they are within 3 years of retirement.

I know of no reason why we should not make the benefit of catchup contributions available to all workers—not just for those of State and local governments. We would do so in this bill for workers in for-profit businesses and also not-for-profit businesses.

Unfortunately, this bill will not allow workers who make \$80,000 or more to make these “catchup” contributions despite the fact there is not such an \$80,000 limit on the current law for State and local employees.

This is a further inequitable situation—something we give State and local government employees but we don't give employees in the private sector. We make up some of that in this legislation but not 100 percent, I am sorry to say. I regret that the bill made this restriction necessary because of negotiations that were going on between the House and Senate.

The bill reduces the vesting period for receipt of the employer's matching contribution and defined contribution plans—such as a 401(k)—from 5 years to 3. Make no mistake about it; this is a huge help to many workers. This will particularly help women, maybe because of taking care of an elderly relation, or maybe to start a family or women who are in and out of the workforce or maybe even in some cases men who are in and out of the workforce, but they are more apt to be women.

This will give them an opportunity to enhance their match so they can make up for lost time because of not being in the workforce.

This bill makes another important change to law that will help low- and modest-income workers. The bill repeals the 25 percent of compensation limit on savings and defined contribution plans.

That is a savings barrier that frustrates those of modest income. Most workers in this Nation will be saving through section 401(k) plans or section 403(b) plans or section 457 deferred compensation plans. In a 401(k) plan, for example, the limit for saving is 25 percent of compensation or a maximum of \$10,500. Our bill repeals the 25 percent of compensation for the benefit of low and modestly paid workers who could be very thrifty people but are prohibited from saving more. They may want to sacrifice during their work years to have a better quality of life in retirement, but the present limit of 25 percent will keep them from doing that. We ought to make it possible for people who want to look ahead to do more for enhancing their retirement and have more savings for that retirement to be able to do it. This legislation does that.

I don't know why the President wants to veto such good provisions for low- and modest-pay workers. In Iowa and much of the Midwest, people are

not only thrifty but they are very frugal. Let them save their money if they want to; that money belongs to them, not to the government.

The bill also greatly enhances pension portability. Because of these provisions, workers will be able to take their pension money with them when they leave one job to go to another job. Their retirement plan contributions will not be stuck in the plan of their previous employer. When more of those matching contributions are vested as I just mentioned a minute ago, a larger account can be rolled over to an IRA and to the retirement savings plan of a subsequent employer, regardless of whether the employer is for profit, not for profit, or a government employer.

Under current law, you can't make those rollovers. The pension portability provisions of this bill are a great way to reduce pension plan leakage. The issue of leakage is real, and I hope we get to examine it in more detail next year and even improve it more than this present legislation does.

The business also improves pension funding so benefits will be more secure over the long term. Good pension funding is one of the very foundations of the ERISA law. Most plans are well funded but some are not funded properly at all. We need to be taking a closer look at the underfunded plans and shine the spotlight on them.

I want to look at the reasons why some plans have not been better funded, and I hope to look at the status of the underfunded plans in greater detail next year.

Finally, I take note for my colleagues and cosponsors that this bill does not include everything I would have liked, and I hope we will be able to do more for pensions according to what Senator GRAHAM of Florida and I suggested in our legislation, which had many cosponsors.

When all is said and done, there are a lot of good provisions in this bill, particularly those that deal with women who are in and out of the workplace so they can make up lost time on their pensions if they want to pay more into it. It does an awful lot for low- and medium-paid employees so that they can make up for the fact, if they want to save more for retirement, that the present 25-percent limit doesn't allow them to do that.

The bottom line is, why would any President want to veto such a good bill?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, in keeping with the back and forth, would it be all right for me to speak for up to 15 minutes?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want to be as agreeable as possible, but the Senator from Idaho took 15 minutes in-

stead of 10 minutes, and the Senator from Iowa took 15 minutes rather than 10 minutes, and I called my friend from Wisconsin, who rushed over here and dropped everything to speak.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I ask if I could have unanimous consent to speak for 30 minutes after the conclusion of the remarks of the Senator from Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

CHANGE OF VOTE

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, on rollcall vote No. 289, I inadvertently voted yea, when I intended to vote nay. I ask unanimous consent that on rollcall vote No. 289, I be permitted to change my vote from yea to nay, which in no way will change the outcome of the vote.

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

NOTHING TO BRAG ABOUT

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, this is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad. This is Sunday, when it is the Sabbath for millions of Americans. Many of my colleagues have explained why we are here today, but I hope this is the last Sunday that the Senate, the U.S. Congress, is in session unless it is for a crisis of national or international concern. I hope this is the last Sunday that we would be here for anything but that.

Next Tuesday, the citizens of this nation will go to the polls and elect the next president of the United States. One of the first challenges that the new president will face is the need to recapture what has been lost for a generation of Americans: trust in the Federal Government.

The American people used to believe in the competence of the Federal Government to provide services and meet this nation's needs in a variety of ways. Unfortunately, in too many instances, this is not happening. Today, the Federal Government is held out as a source of scorn and ridicule.

The fact of the matter is that the Federal Government has brought most of this on itself through a gross inattention to management.

In 1993, Vice President GORE launched his “Reinventing Government” initiative. Purported to make government “work better and cost less,” it had every intention to turn the diminished reputation of the Federal Government around.

However, this initiative will be remembered not for its modest accomplishments, but for missed opportunities. It has rejected bold efforts to reform Federal programs and personnel issues, and actually contributed to the growing human capital crisis that will

be a major headache of the next administration.

It will be one of the most formidable tasks of the next administration.

As we have all seen, the Vice President is trying to run away from the label of being for "Big Government." In recent remarks in Arkansas, and in the presidential debates, he pointed to Reinventing Government as proof that he favors small government.

He claims credit for shrinking the Federal Government by 300,000 positions. In the third Presidential debate held earlier this month, the Vice President boasted that, due to his efforts, the Federal Government is "now the smallest that it has been since . . . John Kennedy's administration."

The Vice President's record of reinventing government is second only to his record of inventing the Internet for genuine achievement and accuracy.

The truth is: more than 450,000 positions have been removed from the Federal Government since January 1993, not 300,000 as the Vice President claims. However, his offense lies not just in the fuzzy math but also in taking credit for reductions where he does not deserve it.

More than 290,000 of the personnel cuts that were made—64 percent of the total—came from the departments of Defense and Energy. These cuts were made at the end of the Cold War in the resulting Pentagon budget reductions, as well as through four rounds of military base closings.

My colleagues should be aware that this process began before the advent of the Clinton-Gore administration and existed independently of the Reinventing Government initiative.

Other significant personnel reductions were also independent of Reinventing Government, including 15,000 employees of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation who were downsized at the end of the savings and loan crisis, and 8,500 employees of the Panama Canal Commission—now just a force of seven after the canal's hand off to Panama.

In truth, most of the non-defense positions discussed by the Vice President have not been eliminated, but merely transferred to the private sector through Federal contracts and Federal mandates. Paul Light, of the highly-respected Brookings Institution, has documented a "shadow workforce" of almost 13 million contractors, grantees, and state and local government employees who serve as a de-facto extension of the Federal workforce—yet without the oversight and accountability. Evidence suggests that oversight of the contractor workforce is poor, yet contract managers were targeted for downsizing by Reinventing Government.

Far more noteworthy than the Vice President's characteristic exaggerations, however, is the sorry state of the

civil service seven years after Reinventing Government was initiated.

As chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, I have led an ongoing review of overall government performance. I have found an appalling lack of forethought by the Clinton-Gore administration toward workforce planning as well as the training and development of Federal employees. The "A-Team," the people who get the job done, and who, for the last 7 years, have been ignored.

In testimony earlier this year before my subcommittee, nonpartisan experts testified that inattention to management has taken a heavy toll on the ability of the Federal workforce to do the job the American people deserve and expect.

Don Kettl, from the University of Wisconsin, testified:

The problem is that we have increasingly created a gulf between the people who are in the government and the skills needed to run that government effectively.

Paul Light of the Brookings Institution put it more bluntly. He testified that the downsizing initiated by Reinventing Government:

Has been haphazard, random, and there is no question that in some agencies we have hollowed out institutional memory and we are on the cusp of a significant human capital crisis.

The U.S. General Accounting Office may well designate human capital as a Federal "high risk" area when it releases its next series on government high risk problems in January 2001. The numbers are alarming, and most of the people are not aware of this, even Members of this body.

Right now, the average Federal employee is 46 years old. By 2004, 32 percent of Federal employees will be eligible for regular retirement, and 21 percent more will be eligible for early retirement.

Taken together, more than half the Federal workforce—900,000 employees—could potentially leave in just 4 years. Obviously, if that happens, neither Vice President GORE nor Governor Bush would have any problems meeting their campaign promises regarding this nation's Federal workforce.

Regrettably, the Clinton-Gore administration squandered 7 years before getting serious about this potential retirement wave. Indeed, Reinventing Government targeted human resources, contract oversight, financial management and other professionals for downsizing, leaving the Federal Government without the expertise it now needs to recruit talented, technology-savvy people to fill the coming vacancies.

When it comes to the achievements of Reinventing Government, Vice President GORE has nothing to brag about. In my opinion, this effort is a liability for the Vice President, not a

feather in his cap. Reinventing Government has failed to improve Government management or confront the fundamental question of how the civil service should be deployed to serve our nation. Cutting costs by only cutting jobs fails to acknowledge the central concern Americans have with Government, and that is ineffective programs, Government waste, command and control policies, and in many instances just plain gridlock.

Agencies with less staff but the same workload only experience more of the bureaucratic meltdown which undermines the public trust and demoralizes the remaining Federal workforce.

Wouldn't it be better if we focused on putting the right individuals in the job the American people actually want the Federal Government to accomplish—missions such as strengthening our national defense, saving Social Security, and saving Medicare—and giving them the training they need to get the job done?

When I asked OMB how much money they spent on training, they said they didn't know. So my subcommittee did a survey of the Federal agencies and we asked them: How much do you spend on training? They didn't know. We did get letters back from a couple of agencies and they said: We know, but we won't tell you because if we do, you, Congress, will take the money away from us.

Mr. President, I am not advocating the Federal Government fill every vacancy, person for person. What we need to do is ensure that every Federal agency has assessed its current and future workforce needs and has planned accordingly. Agencies must have the flexibility to design the recruiting and training programs that will allow them to attract and retain quality personnel and ensure they are deployed in the most effective way. In other words, the Federal workforce should be treated as an investment, not an expense.

Earlier this year, when I had begun to examine the management of human capital in my subcommittee, I asked for the training budgets of all Federal agencies. As I mentioned, they did not know; they did not collect the information. That is incredible.

The coming human capital crisis creates an opportunity for the next administration to reshape the 21st century Federal workforce, to improve Federal performance and efficiency, and to invest in the people who make the Government run. My hope is that in 4 years the next President will boast, not just of reducing the size of Government, but also of a well planned reorganization of Federal jobs, and of having equipped our Federal workforce to support a more focused and more streamlined Federal mission so they can work harder and smarter and do more with less.

I yield the floor.