

or veterans hospitals, we see the reality of what has happened to many of those who have come back without limbs and with other kinds of injuries that will stay with them the rest of their lives.

We do not have a firm count with respect to the other 1.6 million who have served there as to how many of them have suffered the mental scars of war. We know there are some estimates that it is as high as 20, 25 percent of them who will suffer from some form of post-traumatic stress syndrome.

So the number we are talking about who have borne the burden of this war in Iraq, as well as the war in Afghanistan, is a number we should never forget. It is not just in Iraq but also in Afghanistan. We now have a casualty list which includes 497 Americans. We have about 2,000 who have been physically wounded and many more who suffer the mental scars of war.

When I think about what we are trying to do with this 21st century GI bill of rights for those who have served since 9/11, the thing I find most objectionable is that some of those on the other side and others who would oppose this legislation say it is too costly, that we ought not to undertake it because it is too costly.

In the context of what we have spent in Iraq and will be spending in Iraq, it is a very small amount of money to make sure we are taking care of our veterans once they return home. In Iraq, the total number, as of today, that has been spent on that war is \$525 billion—\$525 billion. Secretary Rumsfeld, at one point in time, said no way, no how will we ever spend \$50 billion on this war. Yet somehow, today, some 6 years later, it is \$525 billion plus that has been spent on the war.

When you consider the expenditures the United States is projected to make to bring this war to conclusion, some estimates out there are \$3 trillion—\$3 trillion—what we are trying to do with this 21st century GI bill of rights is simply to provide an opportunity for those who have served since 9/11 to get an opportunity for an education at a cost that would be \$2.5 billion to \$4 billion a year.

When we consider the fact we are burning \$12 billion a month in Iraq today, to provide this benefit to our veterans at a cost of \$2.5 billion to \$4 billion a year is a very worthy investment, and in the relative context of how much is being invested in that war effort, it is a very small amount.

I would hope at the end of the day it is not only 60 Senators who vote yes to include this 21st century GI bill of rights in this emergency supplemental, but that we could get a unanimous approval out of this Senate that this is the thing we should do because it is the right thing to make sure we are taking care of those who have served us since 9/11.

Again, I appreciate the great leadership of our good friend, JIM WEBB, who has worked so hard to bring together so many cosponsors of this legislation both here in the Senate, as well as the House of Representatives. I urge my colleagues to fully support this legislation as it moves forward.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

THE ECONOMY

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, economic anxiety is pervasive among the middle class in my State of Ohio and throughout our great country, and there is good reason for that. The average duration of unemployment—17.5 weeks—is longer than at the start of the two previous recessions. In 2001, it took the average unemployed worker about 12.5 weeks to find work. In 1990, it took the average unemployed worker almost 12 weeks to find work. The average duration of unemployment now is about 17.5 weeks.

In fact, long-term unemployment is higher now than it has been at any other time since Congress first extended unemployment benefits, since 1980. The share of workers suffering long-term unemployment, meaning those who remain jobless after their first 6 months of benefits run out—so if their benefits run out after 6 months, that defines long-term unemployment by the Government—the share of those workers is nearly 17 percent higher than the 11 percent at the start of the 2001 recession and higher than the 9.8 percent at the start of the 1990 recession.

My State of Ohio has not added jobs since the end of the last recession, even while economists and an indecisive President wonder whether the country is entering another one, with all of their definitions and all of their pondering these questions and all of the indifference that comes out of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. What I do know is that there are 58,000 fewer jobs in Ohio than there were in November 2001.

In the past year around my State, I have attended almost 100 roundtables where I have convened meetings of 120, 125 people who sit around a table and talk to me about their hopes and dreams, what is happening in their communities, ways I can help, and all

of the things that can help me do my job in the Senate. One of the topics that came up again and again during these meetings was the topic of economic insecurity. Wages are stagnant, jobs are scarce, and jobs are too often temporary. Sometimes, laid-off workers have seen their lives change. Instead of one good-paying job, they are holding two part-time or full-time jobs that pay significantly less than the job they held earlier. Middle-class families are struggling now and deeply worried about the future.

The Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee held a hearing today on plant closings and workers' rights. This summer marks 20 years since Congress passed major plant closing legislation known as the WARN Act, a bill championed by Senator Howard Metzenbaum from Ohio, who held this seat, and Senator KENNEDY, who is our committee chair today on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.

One of the witnesses today was a gentleman from Senator KENNEDY's State of Massachusetts, Joe Aguiar, who worked for a fabric manufacturer for nearly 30 years. He and 900 coworkers were laid off without any notice last summer. As are so many workers in manufacturing, he is about 50 years old. Like so many other workers in my State of Ohio, in Springfield and Lima and Tiffin and Marietta, their lives have been upended. For most, the pensions and health care which they earned and which they desperately need and which they thought had been promised to them, so often the pensions and health care will be slashed.

Mr. Aguiar, as workers do in places such as Marion, OH, and Xenia and Zanesville—those workers need an extension of unemployment insurance. Now more than ever, we need to extend those unemployment benefits because so many workers see their unemployment benefits run out because they can't find comparable jobs.

It is very simple. Economists on Wall Street and Washington and universities all say that every dollar invested in unemployment benefits leads to \$1.64 in growth—more than any other stimulus package, any other stimulus program, any other way to put money into the economy. We had this discussion, and the unemployment extension was blocked by congressional Republicans some months ago. In addition, we offered a stimulus package which will, in fact, put money in people's pockets—a good thing. Unemployment extension would have come quicker and put money into the pockets of those who will spend it immediately because they are struggling. They need the money for gas for their cars to go out and look for jobs, for food to feed their families, and the daily necessities of life.

The Congressional Budget Office agrees that a dollar in unemployment

benefits leads to \$1.64 in growth, finding that extending unemployment benefits is cost-effective and the single fastest acting measure.

The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, New York Times, and the Akron Beacon Journal in my State all agree. Last week, the House approved an extension of unemployment insurance. The Democrats are trying to—or are going to—include unemployment insurance extension in the stimulus package. We hope the Republicans don't filibuster this, and that the President finally changes his mind and signs an extension of unemployment insurance. It is a reasonable extension and needs to be done now.

As I came over here today to talk about unemployment benefits and extending them, my thoughts turned to Senator KENNEDY and his family. Senator KENNEDY, who we find out today has been diagnosed with a serious illness, has been fighting for an extension of unemployment insurance certainly lately in this case, and other times, but he is always fighting for workers, the poor, and the middle class. Nobody in this Congress has consistently, or for a longer period of time, in the history of this institution, fought for workers or the middle class the way Senator KENNEDY has, and the way he will continue to; he has been tireless about this.

Just last week, I stood on the Senate floor with Senator KENNEDY as we worked together to pass legislation that came out of his committee, a committee on which I also sit, the Health, Education, Labor, Pension Committee, to establish collective bargaining rights for firefighters and others. When it comes to issues facing working families, Senator KENNEDY, as recently as last week, fought for legislation to give workers a civil right—the right to collective bargaining. He has been the compass of this institution too. He focuses his attention and our attention on the insecurities so many families in this country are facing. Our prayers today are with him as he heals, and with his lovely family.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we close morning business.

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

Mr. REID. What now is the pending business before the Senate?

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A message from the House is the pending measure.

The Senator from New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I raise a point of order that title VIII in its entirety, section 1004 of title X, and section 1005 of title X, each violates paragraph 4 of Senate rule XVI in the Reid motion to concur in the House amendment No. 2, with an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The point of order is sustained. The motion to concur with the amendment falls.

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I appreciate the patience of my friend from New Jersey. He was here much earlier in the day. For a number of reasons we were unable to have him recognized at that time, but he is always such a team player who is willing to wait. I appreciate my friend from New Jersey very much.

At this time I now move to concur with House amendment No. 2, with the amendment which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Mr. REID moves to concur in the House amendment No. 2 to Senate amendment to H.R. 2642 with an amendment 4803.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 4804 TO AMENDMENT NO. 4803

Mr. REID. I have a second-degree amendment at the desk and I now ask for its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 4804 to amendment No. 4803.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I now send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment No. 2 to H.R. 2642, the Supplemental Appropriations bill, with an amendment, Senate amendment No. 4803.

Harry Reid, Richard Durbin, Benjamin L. Cardin, Charles E. Schumer, Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Bill Nelson, Amy Klobuchar, Jack Reed, Dianne Feinstein, Mary L. Landrieu, Joseph Lieberman, Daniel K. Akaka, Barbara A. Mikulski, Byron L. Dorgan, Maria Cantwell, Sherrod Brown.

Mr. REID. I now ask unanimous consent the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have had a number of conversations with the distinguished Republican leader and I have told him where we are going to try to get by the end of the work week on this matter now before the Senate, and he is mulling over my suggestions that I made to him this afternoon. We will meet again and talk about this tomorrow.

We also have now the budget conference report that has been filed. That was done this afternoon. Tomorrow I am going to ask consent that we move to that. There is a 48-hour rule. Under the 48-hour rule we can't get to that until Thursday at 4 o'clock. I think it would be to everyone's interest to see if we could get rid of that—I don't know if "get rid of" are the right words, but see if we can move on to that and adopt that report tomorrow.

We also received from the House the veto message—I am sorry, the farm bill. We are going to have to, at some time before we leave here, have a vote on overriding the President's veto on the farm bill. So there are things we have to do.

The budget has a statutory time. I am not certain we will need to use the whole 10 hours. I rather doubt it. We have the veto override. That is very privileged. We can spend a lot of time on that or whatever time people want. We hope we could get to that very quickly and see where the votes are.

And then we still have the supplemental to dispose of. So we have a lot to do in the next few days, but with some cooperation I think we can get to where we need to get. I certainly hope so. I hope that is important and understandable to the Senators.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now