

where there is a particular problem. This mine where the explosion occurred was huge. It had numerous double-digit entrances into different parts of the mine. It was huge.

But, anyway, closing down a mine or part of a mine does not always work that way because companies have found a loophole in this part of the law, the part dealing with so-called "patterns of violations." They just keep contesting and appealing. They appeal and they appeal right on up to Federal court. They appeal the decisions to prevent the finding of a pattern. That is why they do it. If you do not want something to happen, if you do not want to pay a fine, you have been cited for a violation, you have been cited for a fine. But if you appeal it, if you appeal it long and keep appealing, then, if you get a judgment against you, you go to the next court higher up, you do not have to either pay a fine or change the way you operate.

The number of appeals has increased dramatically from just 6 percent of total violations in 2005 to 27 percent last year. With such a tremendous backlog of cases and limited manpower, the average appeal took 587 days to finalize last year, which is bad for everybody. Some operators have taken advantage of this loophole, preventing government action and imposing a serious risk to the miners' safety.

West Virginians can rest assured that I plan to press this issue aggressively. We are already taking steps to get to the bottom of this. I am glad that President Obama has been involved, and he has called a lot of folks, including miners' families. He has requested a full report to him on what Federal investigators have learned about the disaster, and it is going to happen this week.

Now, maybe that is too early. They may not know everything yet. But he wants to be kept abreast of what is happening. I have asked, and others, for a full briefing on the findings for West Virginia's Congressional Delegation. I decided that was not selfish; I decided that was the right thing to do. I want to know what the President knows, and that is going to happen.

I have requested that MSHA conduct a top-to-bottom review of all mine safety violations all across the country so that we can get a sense of perspective of where we are in this mine and others in other States. And I have also requested hearings and oversight investigations from the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. They were kind enough to allow me to sit with them during the hearings regarding the MINER Act so that I could contribute what I know.

In closing, I wish to say our coal miners have lost too many brothers and too many sisters. Coal mining has always been dangerous, and it is a common story in West Virginia—southern

West Virginia particularly—which is where I first went, where there is so much coal mining that mothers do not want their sons to go into coal mining. But there they are living up a hollow, up a creek. No other work is available, and they can get paid \$60 to \$70,000 for doing this job after some training.

What are they meant to do? What if it is a mine which does not have any kind of representation which allows people to tell somebody in authority that something is not being done safely?

Well, we have mines where the operators use intimidation. If somebody tries to do something like that, they are out of a job. There are all kinds of ways to do that. And while we all know their journey is a dangerous one, our coal miners must know that everything is being done to keep them safe. That is why I am standing here, simply to say that.

We have a solemn, urgent and, I think, sacred obligation in Congress to find the truth, do it fairly and carefully, and take action in their honor. These men have given us all they can, and we must honor this sacrifice.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECESS

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now be in recess until 2:15 p.m. this afternoon.

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

Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, at 12:22 p.m., the Senate recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BEGICH).

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

CONTINUING EXTENSION ACT OF 2010

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 4851, which the clerk will report by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows: Motion to proceed to the bill (H.R. 4851) to provide a temporary extension of certain programs, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to pro-

ceed is agreed to and the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 4851, which the clerk will report by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4851) to provide a temporary extension of certain programs, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, we are now on the temporary extension of unemployment insurance benefits. This bill will help millions of Americans who are struggling to feed their families, struggling to pay the bills.

Take, for example, a single father from Missoula, MT. He has been out of work for weeks. He exhausted his State benefits, and he is now receiving Federal extended benefits. He called the Montana Unemployment Insurance Claims Processing Center, and he said if his unemployment insurance benefits are not extended, he does not know how in the world he is going to take care of his daughters. He continues to search for a job. But for now, unemployment insurance benefits are the lifeline for him and for his family.

Unemployment benefits help him to pay the bills for his daughters. Unemployment benefits help the single dad from Missoula and also help millions of Americans who, through no fault of their own, have fallen victim to this Great Recession.

As we meet today, benefits have lapsed for 200,000 Americans. Another 200,000 Americans could lose their benefits, too, if we do not pass this bill this week.

Unemployment benefits help our unemployed neighbors. In helping our neighbors, we also help to keep open the neighborhood grocery store and the neighborhood gas station. In helping our unemployed neighbors, we also help to keep houses out of foreclosure. In helping our unemployed neighbors, we also help the economy.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office says that extending additional unemployment benefits would have one of the largest effects on economic output and unemployment per dollar spent of any option. The CBO chart behind me tells us how effective increasing aid to the unemployed can be.

The CBO analyzed the effectiveness of a number of job creation proposals. For each policy, the CBO estimated the number of jobs created for each dollar of budgetary cost. You will see on the chart behind me, there are 11 policies the CBO analyzed. Increasing aid to the unemployed is ranked first. It is No. 1, at the top of the chart. You can see it with the blue line. Among all these policies, increasing aid to the unemployed is the most effective. The Congressional Budget Office says it will create the most jobs per dollar of budgetary cost. It is the most efficient and creates more jobs. Other policy options are much less cost effective.