

statements related to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 83) was agreed to.

Mr. INOUE. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE OVERSIGHT REFORM ACT OF 2011—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1619, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the consideration of S. 1619, a bill to provide for identification of misaligned currency, require action to correct the misalignment, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

WORKING TOGETHER

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to come down to the floor once again to speak to you and the American people. I come to the floor today because there is something that too many people in Washington, DC, are missing right now; that is, we are Americans first.

It is a simple idea but one that seems easily forgotten in politics because Washington has a way of making elected officials act like partisans rather than problem solvers. For example, how can any one Member of the Senate be 100 percent right? I just don't know how that happens. How can they also vote 100 percent of the time with their own party? Do they honestly believe their party is right 100 percent of the time or is it easier than going with the alternative—easier than working together with people whom one doesn't agree with on every single issue?

I ran for the Senate to make a difference, and I believe the voters of this country sent us here to find ways in which we can all agree, to move our country forward and to make things better. Governing wisely doesn't mean spending all our time politicking—making the other side uncomfortable by voting a certain way or taking uncomfortable votes, putting those votes

in the bank for more petty attacks during the election season. But why else would we spend hours and days trying to ram through one-sided bills that can't pass simply to highlight our differences? Is that honestly why we were sent here today? Because there is no Republican bill that is going to pass and there is no Democratic bill that is going to pass. It needs to be a bipartisan, bicameral effort that the President will sign.

We face very huge challenges. That means we must rise to the occasion and rise above politics to accomplish the very big things the American people expect from their elected officials. Our jobs and economic picture, as we all know, is bleak. The line of unemployed workers would stretch across America and back again. Our national debt and deficits are spiraling out of control. Working families are getting squeezed by the high cost of energy, high health care costs, high education costs. Businesses are squeezed by high tax rates, burdensome regulations, and uncertainty about the future and the political leadership in this country. Our housing market is frozen, and the government is making it harder and harder, rather than easier, for borrowers to refinance. Yet with all these challenges we have, the answer here in Washington is just more of the same—more threats, more gridlock, more partisanship. I say enough already, because I have said this back home in Massachusetts and people, I think, greatly appreciate the sentiments: We are Americans first. If we don't work together right now—at this moment in time, right now—then we are going to miss a great opportunity.

We need to focus on jobs. We need to focus on the economy. That is what I have done since the day I got elected. I believe the American people deserve better. They deserve better than congressional gridlock and political gamesmanship. For example, the President—not you, Mr. President, but the President—has given us a jobs bill that isn't perfect, but it is a start. The majority leader has said the Senate might consider the President's package eventually. Really? Eventually? We are in a financial emergency. We are going to talk about creating jobs eventually?

Let's be honest with those who sent us. The current proposal from the President isn't going to pass either Chamber if it relies entirely on tax increases to pay for it. I know it and the Presiding Officer knows it. So when we bring it up, are we going to try to make it better? Are we going to try to pass it?

I urge the majority leader to bring the jobs bill—or jobs bills—to the floor that can actually get 60 votes as well as have a chance of passing in the House. What would they look like? They would look like parts of the President's proposal that actually have bipartisan support and can help our fellow Americans immediately. We should take the things everybody agrees on

and bring them forward now—right now. We could pass a payroll tax cut for both employers and employees. I stood when he said that. I clapped. I agree with him.

We can also pass his version of the Hire A Hero Act that provides tax incentives for employers to hire our heroes who are returning from doing incredible service for our country. It puts them back to work. Their unemployment rate is 25 percent. I am all for it. I clapped again. It is a great idea.

We can get to work on reforming our Tax Code in a way that eliminates loopholes and leads to lower rates. We can do these things. It is possible. Those are the things we agree on and we should be doing immediately—not just bringing a bill forward, knowing it is not going to pass and then spotting a particular person or party for an election season that is so far away that if we don't do something right away, we are going to be in deep trouble and miss the opportunity. We are Americans first. We can do it better and we should do it better.

I have been a little bit discouraged—it seems to go in ebbs and flows—about the ability to actually have an open amendment process. We had to sign a letter to the President guaranteeing we would actually move forward with the trade agreements. Then we had an open amendment process and, quite frankly, I think when it was done, everybody was satisfied that it was just that—an open amendment process—and we got some good suggestions and sent them off to the President. I am eager for those bills to be passed.

We need to allow our Members to offer their own ideas on job creation. There is no one particular person, whether it be the President, the majority leader, the minority leader, or any individual here, who has all the ideas on job creation. Since when? I have a vote, just as each and every one of my colleagues does. I am sure the Presiding Officer has some amendments he thinks would help job growth in his State. I know we have worked on one that was cited by independent groups as being probably the No. 1 way to actually get the economy moving, but we will not even have the opportunity to allow that to be filed as an amendment. Is that right? Of course not.

I have a number of bipartisan pieces of legislation, one of which I just referenced with the Presiding Officer, to help boost our economy in Massachusetts. Whether it is working with our fishermen to protect that industry which provides food for American citizens and throughout the world or whether it is the high-tech sector, bio-farming—you name it—my bills will help solve, as will the Presiding Officer's and others, some of our economic problems. It will not be done overnight, but it is a first step. There is absolutely no reason we can't move forward to have an open amendment process on a bill that will actually create jobs. But they will make a difference in

Massachusetts today, and that is what my constituents sent me here to do.

Secondly, we need to focus on our debt and deficits. They are out of control. When I got here, we had an \$11.5 trillion national debt. It is now up to \$14.5 trillion in a little over 1 year. There is plenty of blame to go around. I hear my colleagues ranting and raving and blaming everybody, but everybody is at fault. Let's acknowledge that and set aside the sniping of whether we should blame this administration or that administration because, quite frankly, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter at this point. Everyone has contributed, and now everyone needs to work together to solve these very real problems.

I am urging the debt committee to put aside partisanship and remember that we are, once again, Americans first and we have an opportunity right now—right now, in this moment in time—to do it better and to solve these very real problems. We should not get lost in party politics. We should think the way great American leaders have always thought. They didn't waste time scoring points. They took the long view. They thought about leaving a legacy for the next generation and leaving our country in a better place. I know, as the Presiding Officer does, and many others, I have pictures of my children and my family—no grandchildren yet—here in my office in Washington and in my home and in Boston. If we care about the young people in those photos, we should be demanding—absolutely demanding, we should have a lot of the folks who are not in leadership actually get up and demand a bipartisan compromise on the debt, one that finally puts us back on the track toward a balanced budget. As the Presiding Officer knows, because I believe he served with him, before I held this Senate seat, it was held by the late Senator Ted Kennedy and before that it was held by John F. Kennedy. I wish to remind my colleagues that it was President Kennedy who famously said: "Those to whom much is given, much is expected."

The voters have given us so much. They have given us so many opportunities to do it better and to be better in solving our country's very real problems. They have given us a responsibility and an opportunity to come here and work and get something done. Every minute we waste, we let them down. With every petty attack, they get more cynical and expect less and less from the people who serve in this great and historic Chamber. While Washington bickers, their faith in our democracy is waning. So I, for one, challenge the majority leader, the minority leader, and all the Members to finally do something for the American people who need our leadership so badly. Let's work together on these big challenges. Let's renew the faith the people of America have bestowed in us and let's remember we are Americans first and we owe it to them to do it better.

I thank the Presiding Officer. 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 that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECESS

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

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:33 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. WEBB).

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE OVERSIGHT REFORM ACT OF 2011—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator from Tennessee wish to be heard on the motion to proceed?

Mr. CORKER. I do.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized under the motion to proceed.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the bill that is about to come before us—the China currency manipulation bill, as many are calling it. I want to speak about this bill because I think it is poor public policy.

I know back home in all of our States people are concerned about the future; I am concerned about the future. People are concerned about manufacturing jobs; I am concerned about manufacturing jobs. But it seems to me what we ought to focus on are those things that will take us to the place we want to be.

I know a lot of times when we are having these types of economic situations, the country turns inward. The country tries to look for other things to blame for the cause of where we are, and I think that is exactly what this bill is doing. Here we have a situation where our economy is slow, we have a financial crisis in Europe that has created tremendous fear in every country in the world. Yet what we are looking at doing in the Senate is creating a trade war with the second largest economy in the world—an economy that is growing rapidly and where our exports to this country grew twice as fast in the year 2010 as it did, on average, with the rest of the world.

To me, Mr. President, this is one of those bills where we cut our nose off to spite our face. It is one of those bills where we try to make it look back home as though we are doing something constructive when what we are really doing is hurting the U.S. economy.

We have three free-trade bills that are coming to the floor—that have

been held up now for over 900 days—and that I think are going to pass. I believe this body is going to embrace them because we know this country is losing market share in the three countries we are reaching an agreement with. We are losing market share in South Korea, we are losing market share in Colombia, and we are losing market share in Panama. In other words, the manufacturers in Tennessee and Virginia and all across this country have a lesser ability to sell their goods into these three countries because these three free-trade agreements are not in place. But it is my sense we are getting ready to do something constructive, in a bipartisan way, and approve these bills.

So what is stunning to me is that we would be actually taking up another bill that would likely hurt trade with the fastest growing other economy and the biggest other economy in the world. By the way, China does manipulate its currency. It does do that. It has something called a managed float. Their financial system is antiquated. It is being liberalized. They understand what they are doing with their currency has to change.

Over the last 5 years, the Chinese currency has actually appreciated relative to our dollar by 30 percent. China knows it has to do even more of that. The fact is, as the standard of living in China improves, people are going to want even greater access to American goods. So what we ought to be doing, instead of trying to create a trade war with a country we want to create better relationships with, is focus on the real problems that exist in China.

There is no question the Chinese Government—the Chinese Government—needs to open procurement policies. As a government, they are a large purchaser of goods. Right now they have laws in place that cause them to purchase those goods from companies that exist in China. We need to cause them to open. The Secretary General, or the person we believe to be the next leader of China, is going to be here in January. This is something our President ought to talk with him about when he comes to visit and create an opportunity for success for our companies in America to be able to sell goods to China.

Secondly, we should focus on intellectual property rights. There is no question Chinese companies take advantage of U.S. companies by stealing intellectual property rights. It exists in almost every area. That is something we certainly should be talking to China about.

Thirdly, we ought to be talking about China investing in this country. The fact is, we would like to see more plants created in this country. We would like to see more manufacturing occur. So, yes, we should be talking to China about making investments in this country.

Lastly, we should certainly be creating avenues for Chinese consumers to