

NOT VOTING—4

Hutchison
Inhofe

Lautenberg
Warner

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 38, the nays are 58. Two-thirds of the Senate voting, a quorum being present, not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

Under the previous order, the motion to concur with amendment No. 3326 is withdrawn.

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleagues in support of H.R. 1299, the Capitol Police Administration bill, the legislative vehicle for the Travel Promotion Act of 2009.

The Travel Promotion Act of 2009 will allow the United States to remain competitive as a welcoming destination for foreign travelers. Our ability to explain the processes and changes made by the United States to gain entry for travel will help to ease fears about the entry process. The proposed nonprofit, independent corporation charged with this responsibility will be able to conduct the necessary outreach and promote tourism in a way that the tourism industry cannot. In addition, an Office of Travel Promotion will be able to work with the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security to improve the entry process.

Promoting the United States as an attractive tourist destination for both leisure and business with international visitors is of the utmost importance to the many States that house destination resorts. Consider the experience of my own home State of Hawaii. Hawaii's economy largely relies on travel and travel related business. Visitors from around the world come to see our islands' natural beauty, and experience the spirit of "Aloha." Our Nation's hospitality industry suffered a severe setback following the events of September 11, 2001, and travel from abroad to the United States fell dramatically.

It is not only the hospitality industry in Hawaii that suffers, but our local businesses. The State of Hawaii boasts its beauty and environment, but many travelers to our State come to do business, which is sometimes obscured or overlooked because of Hawaii's label as a tourist destination. The hospitality industry's employees rely on vacationers and businessmen and women to provide for their families. The economic activity generated by this industry continues to struggle during these financially challenging times.

Hawaii's experience is not unique. The hospitality industry nationwide continues to face similar challenges, and the economic effects have rippled through the nation to impact all of our citizens. The State of Hawaii's visitor statistics continue to reflect the downward trend. Preliminary travel data for 2009 indicate that there was an overall 3.5 percent decline in the number of international visitors to the islands compared to the number of international visitors in 2008. Nationwide,

the number of international visitors between January and November of 2009 fell by 7.2 percent compared to the same period during 2008.

Both developing countries and industrialized economies around the world have ministers and offices that promote travel to their respective countries. However, the United States does not have an office that promotes travel and tourism abroad. This legislation is an important first step in the right direction. Establishing an Office of Travel Promotion will help to attract foreign travelers to the United States. This will not only sustain our tourism based industries, it reinforces business relationships and promotes a better understanding between Americans and our friends abroad. Interacting with the American people is a valuable tool at our disposal to dispel international travelers of misconceptions they may have about our country. Approximately 74 percent of visitors have a more favorable opinion of the United States after visiting our country.

The economic activity generated by international travel and its promotion should be approached in the same manner we foster other industries equally important to jobs and the economy. The Travel Promotion Act of 2009 is vital to our travel and tourism industry's ability to compete globally, and to restore confidence in the United States' image as a country that is committed to welcoming our friends from abroad. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and help us ensure that international business and leisure travel to the United States is given all of the tools necessary to succeed.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 1299.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 78, nays 18, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 28 Leg.]

YEAS—78

Akaka	Boxer	Collins
Alexander	Brown (OH)	Conrad
Barrasso	Burris	Dodd
Baucus	Byrd	Dorgan
Bayh	Cantwell	Durbin
Begich	Cardin	Ensign
Bennet	Carper	Enzi
Bennett	Casey	Feingold
Bingaman	Chambliss	Feinstein
Bond	Cochran	Franken

Gillibrand	Levin	Sanders
Graham	Lieberman	Schumer
Hagan	Lincoln	Shaheen
Harkin	Lugar	Snowe
Hatch	McCaskill	Specter
Inouye	Menendez	Stabenow
Isakson	Merkley	Tester
Johanns	Mikulski	Thune
Johnson	Murkowski	Udall (CO)
Kaufman	Murray	Udall (NM)
Kerry	Nelson (NE)	Vitter
Klobuchar	Nelson (FL)	Voinovich
Kohl	Pryor	Webb
Landrieu	Reed	Whitehouse
Leahy	Reid	Wicker
LeMieux	Rockefeller	Wyden

NAYS—18

Brown (MA)	Cornyn	McCain
Brownback	Crapo	McConnell
Bunning	DeMint	Risch
Burr	Grassley	Roberts
Coburn	Gregg	Sessions
Corker	Kyl	Shelby

NOT VOTING—4

Hutchison
Inhofe

Lautenberg
Warner

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I have no real strong feelings about this bill other than that I do not think this country needs to create another corporation, a corporation that would be authorized to impose an annual assessment on U.S. members of the travel and tourism industry represented on a board of directors of the corporation established in the Department of Commerce, Office of Travel Promotion. I do not believe we need another office in this bureaucracy, so I will be voting against this bill. I voted against it on June 22 of last year, September 8 of last year, and September 9 of last year, so my vote would have been the same this year.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT
AGREEMENT—H.R. 4213

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Monday, March 1, at 3 p.m., the Finance Committee be discharged of H.R. 4213, an act to provide for certain extenders; that once the committee is discharged, the Senate then proceed to its consideration; that after the bill is reported, Senator BAUCUS or his designee be recognized to offer a substitute amendment, and once the amendment is reported by number it be considered read.

Mr. President, prior to a ruling, I would like to express my appreciation to the Republican leader and all those who worked so hard to get us to the point we are at today and next week. We should have a very good week next week. Everyone should be ready for some legislating. There will be a number of amendments offered, some of which I know, most of which I don't know what they will be. But a lot of work has gone into this very important legislation and, again, I express my appreciation to the Republican leader and others who worked so hard to get us to where we are.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—
H.R. 4691

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 4691, a 30-day extension of provisions which expire on Sunday, February 28—unemployment insurance, COBRA, flood insurance, Satellite Home Viewer Act, highway funding, SBA business loans and small business provisions of the American Recovery Act, SGR and poverty guidelines—received from the House and at the desk; that the bill be read three times, passed, and the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. BUNNING. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Senator has objected to extending unemployment benefits across the United States of America which will expire on Sunday night. He has also objected to extending COBRA benefits, which is health insurance for the unemployed people across America. This has been done regularly, now that we are in this recession, because millions of Americans are out of work. We know there are four or five, maybe even six people for every available job. Folks have depleted their savings, they run the risk of losing their homes, they are trying to keep their children in school, they are trying to provide the necessities of life, and the Senator from Kentucky objects to their having unemployment benefit checks.

What does it mean to me? Well, in the State of Illinois, it means that as of Sunday night, 15,000 people in my State will stop receiving unemployment benefits because of the objection of the Senator from Kentucky. It means that every week thereafter another 15,000 will lose their unemployment benefits. It is a harsh reality that many of these families have been looking for work for a long time.

The Senator has also objected to providing assistance to small business. The request I made would extend, for 30 days, provisions of the Small Business Act and the Recovery Act lending programs for small businesses. So what the Senator from Kentucky is doing, as of Sunday night, is shutting down the availability of credit for small businesses across America through this Small Business Administration program. In the midst of a recession, when we are told small businesses are the engine that will bring us out of this recession, when they are desperate for credit to keep their doors open, fami-

lies who have spent a lifetime building a small business are going to be denied an opportunity to borrow money through the Small Business Administration because of the objection of the Senator from Kentucky.

Let me say a word about COBRA. One of the first casualties of unemployment is health insurance. Sadly, many of these people are in a position where they do not qualify for Medicaid—health insurance for the poorest people. So they find themselves without health insurance for the first time because they are unemployed. We said, under President Obama's Recovery Act, we are going to help you pay for those premiums so you can continue to have health insurance for your family. That expires Sunday night too. The objection of the Senator from Kentucky means thousands of people across America will lose their health insurance. Because of his objection, they will lose it on Sunday night.

Workers who lose their jobs count on COBRA. And COBRA, frankly, is expensive. On average, COBRA coverage consumes 84 percent of unemployment benefits. It is not cheap. The average monthly unemployment benefit in Illinois is just over \$1,300. The average monthly family COBRA premium is over \$1,100. Through the Recovery Act, we said we would pick up 65 percent of that. Well, because of the objection of the Senator from Kentucky, if these people want to maintain their health insurance through unemployment, they are basically going to have to turn to savings or give it up.

Why? Why would we want to heap this kind of suffering on people who are already going through such misfortune? It isn't just Illinois that suffers, it is virtually every State. As of December, there were 221,000 people in Kentucky unemployed—10.7 percent of the Kentucky workforce—63,000 people in Louisville, 18,000 people in Lexington, 6,000 in Bowling Green, 5,500 in Elizabethtown, 5,000 in Owensboro. As they are desperately looking for work, many of these people are just getting by on unemployment checks. They are just trying to get by.

Last month, the State of Kentucky had the sharpest increase in unemployment claims in the country—in the entire United States—with 2,510 more claims than the month prior due to the automobile industry and manufacturing job cuts. Unfortunately, many of these people will lose their unemployment benefits in Kentucky because of the objection of their Senator. If Senator BUNNING has his way, more than 14,000 Kentucky residents will lose their unemployment assistance in March and 60,000 by the end of June.

Why? Why are we doing this to these families in Kentucky and Illinois and every State? Everyone acknowledges there is only one objection. Everyone in this Chamber acknowledges we are a caring and compassionate country, and we will, on an emergency basis, extend a helping hand to those who have lost their jobs.

Most Senators have left for the evening, but some have stayed on the floor. I have asked them if they would like to say a word on this issue. They are going to go home and tell their people back home there are going to be some terrible things happening as of Sunday night because of the objection of the Senator from Kentucky: 15,000 in my State, thousands in his own State and all across the country.

I am staying tonight to talk about this because, frankly, I don't think this ought to be business as usual. I don't think one Senator ought to be able to heap this kind of suffering and misfortune on people who are already struggling in this economy. If you wish to take it out on somebody, take it out on a colleague or a debate, but these are helpless people out of work.

Senator REID offered to the Senator from Kentucky an amendment—bring to the floor your theory on how to pay for this. He has a theory. He wants to pay for it with unexpended stimulus funds, as I understand it. He would have had his chance on the floor to make his case. He would have had a rollcall at the end of the day. He might have won, he might have lost, but he came to the floor yesterday and said I am not going to fall for that. I may lose this amendment and therefore I am going to object.

That is the nature of things. It is like when you pitch a ball game. Sometimes you win and sometimes you lose. On the floor, sometimes you win—

Mr. BUNNING. Do you know about that?

Mr. DURBIN. I have never pitched a ball game. I never have. I am very proud of what you have done in your baseball career. But let me tell you, this is a wild pitch you are throwing tonight because this is a pitch that is hitting somebody in the stands, it is hitting an unemployed worker in Illinois. That is a wild pitch that should not have been thrown, Senator.

I believe when you look at what this is going to do across America, this is unforgivable that we would do this to these unemployed people.

For the Senator from Michigan, I yield for the purpose of a question.

Ms. STABENOW. I appreciate the Senator from Illinois, my friend, in his comments. I guess my question would relate to the State of Michigan because the Senator listed off some very important statistics. I wonder if the Senator is aware that in March, 62,000 people in the great State of Michigan, where we have the highest unemployment rate—we have a 14.6-percent unemployment rate, over 700,000 people right now unemployed, looking for work. These are people trying to keep a roof over their head, trying to keep food on their table, they are trying to hold things together as they are looking for a job. Yet we have 62,000 great people from Michigan who are going to lose their benefits in March. In fact, if this continues—and I know all of us are working very hard to get a year extension of