

bill also boosts Pell grants by \$500 to make college more affordable.

As much as anything, people are wondering whether the Federal Government is going to take action to help them—or will the old political divisions keep this Congress from taking effective action to help people in their daily lives.

By passing this bill, we show that we will step up to the plate and help address these concerns. This bill is a first step. Other steps will be needed, but this recovery package is a good beginning. Vote for the bill.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

With unemployment at its highest level in nearly 30 years, millions of American are struggling to pay for basic necessities as food, housing and health care, it is clear Congress must act.

In my district, our manufacturers have been hit hard by the crisis in the auto industry; our tourism economy has taken a beating as fewer Americans can afford to take a vacation; mining and forestry are suffering as the demand and price for raw materials has plummeted.

Unemployment ranges from the national average of 7.2 percent in Menominee County to 19 percent in Mackinac County. The Congress must act.

This legislation is not perfect; it is not everything I would put into an economic recovery legislation. Still, the Congress must act and act without delay!

My staff and I have been contacted by dozens of local officials from across Northern Michigan who have identified more than \$360 million in road, bridge, water infrastructure and construction projects that could help jump start their local economies.

I expect only a portion of these projects may be funded—but Congress must act.

While I have reservations about this legislation, Congress must act to invest in the Americans who need a helping hand, not a hand out.

Michigan's unemployment rate is at 10.6 percent. We must act to extend unemployment benefits to help 3.5 million Americans who have exhausted their benefits.

We must act to increase food stamps to help 31 million Americans, half of whom are children.

We must act to protect health insurance coverage for Americans who have lost their jobs and are one illness or sickness away from bankruptcy.

Mr. Chair, this bill is not perfect. But the needs of the millions of Americans struggling through this deep recession demands the U.S. Congress to act. We must act. I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in supporting the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Chair, I support the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the important first step it takes toward reinvigorating our faltering economy. The bill invests critical dollars in nearly all major industries and will create more than 4 million jobs by the fourth quarter of 2010.

Over 300,000 jobs will be saved in Florida alone, reducing unemployment by 2.4%.

The \$102 billion investment in increased income support will go to those families who are feeling the strains of financial pressure the most, providing increases in unemployment benefits, food stamps and COBRA healthcare.

Floridians can expect to see over \$29.8 million directed to Head Start, over \$105 million directed to child care and development block grants, over \$13 million for low-income energy assistance, over \$15 million for elderly nutrition programs, and nearly \$9 million aimed for preventative health services.

This will help us ensure that those who have fallen with the economy won't be beaten down, but are given the protection and help they need to get back up.

I am proud the bill provides \$211 billion in aid to state and local governments for vital services such as public education and law enforcement.

My own state of Florida is grappling with significant fiscal problems, due in large part to our foreclosure crisis, which has resulted in shrinking tax revenue, declining property values and slow retail sales.

I know that this federal aid to state and local governments will help fill in the gaps, ensuring our children get the educational support they need to compete on the global market. The bill provides over \$654 million for grades K–12 and over \$306 million for higher education institutions to modernize, maintain and repair their facilities in Florida.

The inclusion of the repeal of the 3% tax withholding on payments made to vendors by government entities will also help stimulate our economy, relieving small business and local governments from this unfair and burdensome requirement. Tax cuts in the stimulus plan will help those with the lowest incomes save more of their hard earned dollars.

In Florida this means those from the lowest end of the scale to those with middle incomes will see their taxes cut by more than 20% in 2009.

I am also pleased that the bill uses this opportunity to look forward, investing in clean and renewable energy and green infrastructure, to create jobs, reduce pollution and help to bring us to a clean energy future.

Mr. Chair, I support this bill and urge its passage.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Chair, I rise today to state for the record the intent of the legislative language in the Special Rules section H.R. 1—American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Title V—Medicaid Provisions, Section 5001, subsection (f) STATE INELIGIBILITY AND LIMITATION.

The intent of this language is to ensure that states which had laws directing reduced eligibility in their state plan or waiver on or before July 1, 2008, not be deemed ineligible to receive the increased FMAP that this bill provides, due to subsequent delays when implementing those provisions. It was the case in Rhode Island that as of July 1, 2008, state law directed and authorized the reduction of eligibility in one group of beneficiaries. These provisions were not finalized and fully effective until October 1, 2008 due to a delay in the implementation of a new extension period for the waiver. The language in this special rule allows states which encountered similar delays to remain eligible for an enhanced FMAP in this Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Chair, I want to thank Chairmen WAXMAN, OBEY and RANGEL, for their leadership and to thank all of the Ranking Members, Committee Members and Staff for this successful effort to bring the American Recovery and Reinvestment act of 2009 to the floor today so that we may deliver

it on schedule to the President's desk. This bill, H.R. 1, will not only stimulate our economy, but will also do much to heal our Nation.

As our president has promised, this bill provides an immediate investment that will create jobs, but also does so with a look to the future so that the jobs created, the infrastructure built, the stronger healthcare system created, the technology that is expanded and the training and education that is improved, not only provides jobs for today but also those we need tomorrow. H.R. 1 will lay a strong foundation upon which to create a more stable and vital economy and will actually create savings in the future.

I am proud to support this bill for the very reason some on purely political reasons oppose it.

I support it because it begins to move our country in a new and better direction—one which once again supports children and working families and begins to lift Americans out of poverty and to expand access to quality, comprehensive and culturally and linguistically appropriate healthcare to everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or geography.

As a physician and as the Chair of the CBC Health Braintrust, I am pleased that this legislation makes the sound and much-needed health and health care investments that many of us have been fighting for over the past eight years.

This bill not only invests needed resources into Medicaid, with increases for the Territories, it extends the period of COBRA coverage to help Americans who have lost their jobs keep their health care coverage and increases FMAP to bolster state economic recovery efforts, but it also begins to modernize our health care system through the widespread implementation of health information technology.

In H.R. 1 we finally begin to make prevention the priority it needs to be—with 3 billion dollars going into a prevention and wellness fund, 1.5 billion dollars going into modernizing and expanding health care services in community health centers and we finally invest in the diversification and expansion of our Nation's health workforce, increasing the number of primary care physicians, nurses and other health care personnel.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas) having assumed the chair, Mr. TIERNEY, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1) making supplemental appropriations for job preservation and creation, infrastructure investment, energy efficiency and science, assistance to the unemployed, and State and local fiscal stabilization, for fiscal year ending September 30, 2009, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members