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## Helena Rotary Club

Max S. Baucus

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Senator \* or Department\*: **BAUCUS**

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MONTH/YEAR of Records\*: **February-2010**

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(1) Subject\*: **Economy**

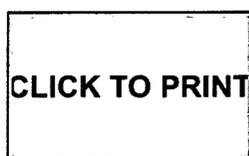
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(2) Subject\* **Remarks before the Helena Rotary Club**

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Senator Max Baucus

Remarks before the Helena Rotary Club

February 17, 2010

**Thank you, Dennis, for that kind introduction.**

**Thanks also to Rotary President Pete Johnson and President-elect Dan Bingham. And, thank you to each of you for having me here with you today.**

**It's great to be home. As some of you may have heard, Washington D.C. has gotten a bit of snow recently. And if you think government is gridlocked, you should see the city once it snows a little.**

**Now here in Montana, we can handle it.**

**But back there you would have thought the apocalypse had happened, or the “SNOW-pocalypse,” or the “SNOW-mageddon” as people are calling it.**

**If you ask most folks here at home, or across the country for that matter, their number one concern is for jobs and the economy.**

**Our neighbors are struggling to make ends meet, if they have a job at all, and small businesses are fighting just to keep their doors open.**

**We are digging our way out of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.**

**Listening to experts like Paul Polzin and Pat Barkey from the University of Montana can be very bleak --especially when they point out that America's economy has lost at least seven million jobs since the recession began in 2007.**

**Right here, in Lewis and Clark County, an area that is typically recession-proof because of the state and federal jobs, we're seeing significant weakness in real estate, construction, and retail trade. And, growth of nonfarm labor income for 2010 is projected at just 1.0 percent, the same rate as 2009.**

**So, it's no secret that we need to create more good-paying jobs here at home. We need to get our economy back on track, and shake off the effects of the recession.**

**We need to help foster more small businesses like Exploration Works right around the corner. With 12 employees this is a great example of the type of small business that drives our state's economy.**

**That is why I am committed to passing targeted, effective legislation to get unemployment down and productivity up. For example, working together with several of my colleagues, both Democrats and Republicans, I have been working on a bill that will cut taxes and get our economy moving again.**

**The bill will do several key things including:**

- **Cut taxes for small businesses by eliminating the payroll tax for any employee they hire that has been out of work for more than 60 days.**

- **Increase tax incentives for small businesses by allowing them to write off additional expenditures.**
- **Invest in Highway funding. Here in Montana we are a highway state and we know better than anyone how crucial it is to invest in our roads, bridges, and waterways. And the good-paying jobs these investments bring.**
- **And, expand the highly successful Build America Bonds program. These bonds provide a real shot in the arm to state and local governments to boost construction projects and create jobs.**

**I am also working on a bill to address both tax extensions and unemployment benefits.**

**But we know that we must do more. We must continue to focus on jobs and the economy. And, the fact remains that one of the best ways to get our economy moving again is to pass meaningful health care reform.**

**I know that many people have very strong feelings about health care, but consider the following facts:**

- **The health care reform bill passed by the Senate will lower the deficit by 132 billion dollars in the first ten years and up to one trillion dollars the following ten years. That is huge savings for our government.**

- **Health care premiums are skyrocketing and swamping families and small businesses budgets. For example, between 2000 and 2007, health care premiums here in Montana rose nearly 90 percent, while average wages only increased about 16 percent. By passing reform we can work to rein in these costs.**
  
- **American companies simply can't compete globally if they have to battle the high costs of benefits here at home.**

**In Montana, we know a thing or two about tough times. We know what it means to face a challenge.**

**We know what it's like to face down massive snow storms or weather through a scorching summer.**

**We know what a hard day's work feels like, and what it means to worry as we balance our checkbook around the kitchen table.**

**We were raised on stories of hardship and sacrifice, it is in our blood.**

**And just like our predecessors who crossed the Rockies or struggled in the mines, we will persevere.**

**We will get our economy moving. We will create jobs. We will do it together and we will succeed.**

**Thank you.**