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Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, give our lawmakers wisdom and spiritual eyes to see You at work. Remind them that, in everything, You are working for the good of those who love You.

Guide our Senators to strive to please You by living blameless, holy, and disciplined lives.

As they battle this coronavirus pandemic, may they not forget the marginalized.

Lord, give our lawmakers a hunger for Your words and a desire to apply Your knowledge in their daily work.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The majority leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the eyes of the Nation are on the Senate. For days now, we have been engaged in intense, bipartisan talks to build emergency relief legislation on a historic scale, to push resources to our healthcare heroes and American workers and families.

Democrats and Republicans sat down together. We crafted this version of a proposal together. This compromise package would push tens of billions of dollars to hospitals and healthcare providers. It would send direct checks to millions of American households—direct checks. It would massively expand unemployment insurance in this crisis. It would stabilize industries to prevent mass layoffs. And, crucially, it would deliver historic relief to small businesses to help Main Street employees from being totally crushed—crushed—by this pandemic.

But, yesterday, when the time came to vote on these urgent measures, our Democratic colleagues chose to block it. So why are the American people still waiting? It is a good question to ask. I hear the markets are not doing well today. They would like to ask the question of us: Why not move? Why are Democrats filibustering the bipartisan bill they helped write?

It is an appropriate question to ask this morning as the country waits on us. So let me give the American people a taste of the outstanding issues we woke up to this morning. Here are some of the items on the Democratic wish list over which they chose to block this legislation last night: tax credits for solar energy and wind energy, provisions to force employers to give special new treatment to Big Labor, and—listen to this—new emissions standards for the airlines.

Are you kidding me? This is the moment to debate new regulations that have nothing whatsoever to do with this crisis? That is what they are up to over there. The American people need to know it.

Democrats will not let us fund hospitals or save small businesses unless they get to dust off the Green New Deal. I would like to see Senate Democrats tell New York City doctors and nurses who are literally overrun as we speak that they are filibustering hospital funding and more masks because

they want to argue with the airlines over their carbon footprint.

I would like to see Senate Democrats tell small business employees in their States, who are literally being laid off every day, that they are filibustering relief that will keep people on the payroll because Democrats' special interest friends want to squeeze employers while they are vulnerable—squeeze these employers while they are vulnerable.

I would like to see Senate Democrats tell all the American seniors who have seen their hard-earned retirement savings literally melt away, as the markets track toward their worst month since 1931, that they are continuing to hold up emergency measures over tax credits for solar panels—tax credits for solar panels.

Even with the Federal Reserve announcing even further extraordinary steps today, the markets are tanking once again, as I said, because this body can't get its act together, and the only reason it can't get its act together is right over here on the other side of the aisle.

So these are just a few of the completely nongermane wish list items that they are rallying behind, preventing us from getting this emergency relief to the American people right now, eleventh-hour demands the Democrats have decided are more important than Americans' paychecks and the personal safety of doctors and nurses.

So remember what one of Speaker PELOSI's top lieutenants in the House said a few days ago—and this is a direct quote: This is a tremendous opportunity to restrict things to fit our vision—to fit our vision. That was the Democratic whip in the House, just laying it out there. It reminds me of the definition of a Washington gaffe: when a politician in Washington tells you what he really means.

We heard something similar here on the Senate floor last night—just last night. Here was one of our Democratic

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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colleagues: "How many times are we going to get a shot at a trillion-dollar-plus program?" Right here on the floor last night: "I don't know how many trillion-plus packages we are going to have." In other words, let's don't waste this opportunity to take full advantage and get our whole wish list done.

They ought to be embarrassed. In fact, I have heard from some of them who are embarrassed, talking like this is some juicy political opportunity. This is not a juicy political opportunity. This is a national emergency.

We had days of productive, bipartisan talks to get to this point. Senate Democrats sat down with Senate Republicans and negotiated furiously to get to this point. The bill now contains a huge number of changes that our Democratic colleagues requested, including major changes. We were this close—this close.

Then, yesterday morning, the Speaker of the House flew back from San Francisco, and suddenly the Senate's serious bipartisan process turned into this leftwing episode of "Supermarket Sweep"—unrelated issues, left and right.

I will tell you what would really lower our carbon footprint. If the entire economy continues to crumble, with hundreds of thousands more Americans laid off because Senate Democrats will not let us act, that will lower our carbon footprint all right. Every single American outside of Washington knows this is no time for this nonsense.

A surgeon in Fresno, CA, says: "We are at war with no ammo." "We are at war with no ammo." That is a surgeon in Fresno. An intensive care nurse in New York City says: "If we don't get the proper equipment soon, we're going to get sick."

Democrats are filibustering more masks and aid for hospitals. Every day, more Americans wake up to the news that their jobs are gone—their jobs are gone. Democrats are filibustering programs to keep people on the payroll, and they are filibustering a huge expansion of unemployment insurance, which they themselves negotiated and put into the bill. Hundreds of dollars extra per week for laid-off workers on top of existing unemployment benefits, and Democrats are blocking it?

This has to stop, and today is the day it has to stop. The country is out of time—out of time. When the Democratic House passed their phase 2 bill, even though Senate Republicans would have written it very differently, we sped it through the Senate and passed it quickly without even amending it. I literally told my colleagues to "gag and vote for it," for the sake of building bipartisan momentum, because Republicans understand that a national crisis calls for urgency and it calls for bipartisanship.

It is time for that good faith to be reciprocated. It is time for Democrats to stop playing politics and step up to the plate. The small businesses in their

own States deserve it. Their own States' emergency room doctors deserve it. Their own constituents who have lost their jobs deserve it.

In my home State of Kentucky, the Governor has effectively paused commerce across the State, and our unemployment system crashed due to demand. Kentuckians need help now, and we aren't alone. I have heard the pleas from healthcare workers in New York and Seattle. I have listened to the small business owners crying out in Brooklyn and Chicago.

Why does only one side understand that this is urgent? Why are these hard-hit cities' own Senators happy to keep this slow-walking going on indefinitely? Is that really something these folks on the other side are comfortable with—indeinitely slow-walking all of this? How can half the Senate not rise to the occasion? At a time when everybody else in the country is pulling together, they are pulling us apart.

The examples are all over the country that we ought to look to: healthcare heroes, to neighborhood volunteers, to national industries. Everybody is unifying and pitching in. What about here in the Senate?

It is time to get with the program. It is time to pass historic relief that we have built together. The country doesn't have time for these political games. They need progress.

So we are going to vote in just a few minutes, and I assure you the American people will be watching.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Yes, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader objects. Objection is heard.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, every time we hear the majority leader come out, it is a partisan screed. I am in my office with the President's Secretary of Treasury, the President's congressional liaison, getting things done. We Democrats are trying to get things done, not making partisan speech after partisan speech.

In the past 24 hours, we got word that a Member of this Chamber, Senator PAUL, has tested positive for coronavirus, and the husband of another Member, Senator KLOBUCHAR, also tested positive. He is in the hospital. I want to let them know—both of them—that the Senate is thinking of them and praying for their speedy recovery, as we are for tens of thousands of American families who are confronting the same situation right now.

Whether you are afraid for a sick family member, an older relative in the hospital, or struggling without work, income, or the knowledge of when your isolation might end, our thoughts are with you right now. These are trying times for all of us, but the scourge of this disease will pass. The American people, as always, will prevail.

As the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the United States eclipses 35,000, the Senate continues to negotiate what will likely be the largest emergency funding bill in American history. As I have mentioned, we have had almost continuous discussions with Secretary Mnuchin. He left my office at about 12:15 last night and was there at about 9 o'clock this morning. The White House congressional liaison, Eric Ueland, has been in and out of the office as well. We are very close to reaching a deal—very close. Our goal is to reach a deal today, and we are hopeful, even confident, that we will meet that goal.

We have been working on a few outstanding issues that are no surprise to everyone. From the very beginning, Democrats have insisted on a Marshall Plan for our medical system, more money for hospitals, community health centers, nursing homes, and urgent medical supplies, such as gloves and masks, ICU beds, testing kits, ventilators, and PPE. Since our negotiations, the numbers have gone up dramatically because the hospitals and our healthcare workers need the help.

We are fighting hard and making progress on funding for State and local governments. They are propping up local healthcare networks virtually on their own. Their revenues are dramatically declining. Many towns and villages across America—the smaller ones in particular—might go broke pretty soon if we do nothing. If we can help the big corporations, we can help our local towns and villages and the taxpayers they represent.

On unemployment insurance, the bill has moved in the direction we have outlined. The original bill has the unexpanded employment benefits last only 3 months. We need to make it longer because the dislocation caused by this crisis will not be over in 90 days, and people who lose their jobs need help. It says to every American who loses his or her job—the Democratic plan that is now in the bill: You will get your full pay from the Federal Government. You can be furloughed by your employer. That means you will keep your benefits, health and otherwise. And it means that you will be

able to come back, and the business you had to leave can reassemble itself quickly after, God willing, this crisis ends.

The bill still includes something that most Americans don't want to see: large corporate bailouts with almost no strings attached. Maybe the majority leader thinks it is unfair to have protections for workers and labor to companies that are getting hundreds of billions of dollars. We think it is very fair to ask for those. Those are not extraneous issues. That is a wish list for workers—nobody else.

We are looking for protection. We are looking for oversight. If this Federal Government is making a big loan to someone—to a big company, we ought to know it and know the details immediately. The bill that was put on the floor by the Republican leader said no one would know a thing about those loans for 6 months at least. In those so-called bailouts, we need to protect workers—the workers those industries employ.

We have been guided by one plan: workers first. That is the name of our proposal. The bill needs to reflect that priority.

We are working on all of these items in good faith as we speak, and we hope and expect to conclude negotiations today. This vote the Senate—it is no surprise—is about to take is merely a repeat of the vote that failed last night. Leader MCCONNELL continues to set arbitrary vote deadlines when the matter of real importance is the status of the bipartisan negotiations.

Let me be clear. The upcoming procedural votes are essentially irrelevant. The negotiations continue no more than 30 feet away from the floor of the Senate in our offices, where the real progress is taking place. Once we have an agreement that everyone can get behind, we are prepared to speed up the consideration of that agreement on the floor. So I am going to get back to negotiations.

We all know time is of the essence. The country is facing twin crises in our healthcare system and in our economy. We have an obligation to get the details right and get them done quickly. That doesn't mean blindly accepting a Republican-only bill. That was the bill we were given. There were lots of things we didn't even know about on Saturday. That means working to make this bill better—better for our small businesses, better for our working families, better for our healthcare system.

Democrats—Democrats—will not stop working with our Republican counterparts until we get the job done. I will continue to update the Senate on the progress of our negotiations.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SCHUMER. I object. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader's objection is heard.

Ms. COLLINS. This is unbelievable.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Maine be allowed to speak for a few minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a quorum call.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SCHUMER. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader's objection is heard.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SCHUMER. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader's objection is heard.

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. I would simply like to know for the sake of the Members—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a quorum call.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent to speak for 30 seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. RISCH. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a quorum call.

Is there an objection to removing the quorum call?

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection to removing the quorum call?

Mr. SCHUMER. Reserving the right to object—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is no right to reserve the right to object.

Mr. SCHUMER. I have the floor. I would ask—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No, you do not.

The Senate is in a quorum call. You have to ask that the quorum call—

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. I would simply like to ask the leader—before we have these speeches, because we were supposed to vote for the next time after he and I spoke—what is the schedule for the rest of the day?

Will he respond?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is my understanding that they are going to let us voice vote this.

Mr. SCHUMER. We have no objection to voice voting the first two and then would like to vote, if the leader wants, now on the third, and then we can have the speeches.

Mr. MCCONNELL. What you are proposing is that we voice vote two, and then the cloture vote occurs automatically?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Parliamentary inquiry: Does the cloture vote occur—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes. The cloture vote pops and occurs third automatically.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I propose we voice vote the first two and then pause so that there are some speeches allowed by Members—up to an hour of speeches allowed by Members before the cloture vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. I have no objection to that. As long as we have a schedule, I have no objection to that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The understanding of the Chair is that there will be voice votes on the first two motions, and then there will be an hour of debate equally divided. There will be an hour of debate prior to a vote on the cloture motion upon reconsideration.

Mr. MANCHIN. Equally divided? An hour on both sides?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. That is fine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The understanding of the Chair is that the request is that the hour of debate would be equally divided prior to the cloture vote on the motion to proceed.

The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MIDDLE CLASS HEALTH BENEFITS TAX REPEAL ACT OF 2019—Motion to Proceed—Resumed

MOTION TO RECONSIDER—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to the motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on the motion to proceed to H.R. 748.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote by which the cloture was not invoked on the motion to proceed to H.R. 748.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now an hour of debate equally divided under the previous order.

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I also ask that the vote be 30 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The vote will be 30 minutes in length. It is so ordered.

The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, we are in the midst of a crisis in our country—a crisis caused by the coronavirus. I cannot believe that the answer to this crisis from our friends on the other side of the aisle, as we move to address the economic consequences that are so severe for the people of this country, is delay, delay, delay; no sense of urgency; no hurry.

I will tell you, I have had the honor to serve in this body for many years. Never—never—have I seen Republicans and Democrats fail to come together when confronted with a crisis. We did so after 9/11. We did so with the financial meltdown in 2008. Here, we are facing an enemy that is invisible but equally devastating to the health of our people and to the health of our economy. Yet, unbelievably, the Democratic leader objected to my even being able to speak this morning. Is that what we have come to? The Democratic leader objected to our convening at 9 o'clock this morning so that we could begin working in earnest. Is that what we have come to?

The fact is, we have been working on a bipartisan effort through task force, with both Republicans and Democrats, making very good progress and putting together a comprehensive package—the third package we have dealt with. This one is to address and prevent the economic devastation that is being caused by this virus.

We don't have another day. We don't have another hour. We don't have another minute to delay acting. I have talked with businesses all over my State—small mom-and-pop businesses, like a diner, a third-generation diner operated by the Simones family in Lewiston, ME. For the first time ever, they have had to close their doors. As Linda Simones told me through tears yesterday: This is the first time ever we have been unemployed. Our son is unemployed. Our friends who have worked with us at this diner for years are unemployed.

We have a very good plan that we worked on in a bipartisan way—Senator MARCO RUBIO and I on the Republican side and Senators BEN CARDIN and JEANNE SHAHEEN, in very good faith, on the Democratic side—that would help these small businesses and keep their employees paid. It would keep their employees getting paychecks. How can that possibly be controversial?

How can any of us want to see millions of Americans lose their paychecks, their health insurance, their contributions to their retirement plans? We have a package that is part of this broader legislation.

As the majority leader pointed out just yesterday, had we invoked cloture, that is not the end of the process. There still could have been 30 hours for us to refine this package.

Keep in mind that every single one of these task forces have been bipartisan. Do we agree on everything? Of course not, but surely, surely, in this time of extreme crisis for our country—when people are getting sick, when people are dying from the coronavirus, when we are facing unemployment rates which could go as high as 20 percent, according to the Treasury Secretary—surely, we ought to be able to pull together and work quickly to respond to the needs of the American people.

I cannot believe the objections to proceeding to this package. Is this package perfect? No. That is why negotiations are still going on.

Don't we want to act quickly to provide relief to the American workers? This is disgraceful. We do not have time. Time is not on our side. Let's get the job done for the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise because my dear friend, I can tell, is very upset. I am upset that we are at this point. I really am. I am working with you on so many things in a bipartisan way. I always have and always will.

With that being said, let me make sure of this. I haven't been here as long as you have and haven't the experience that you have. The way I understand it, voting for cloture takes a 60-vote threshold, except for the judges, which, basically, the previous leader, Senator Harry Reid from Nevada, changed. I was opposed to that. We are in a situation now where, if you vote yes on cloture and then you are not in agreement with the bill, it only takes 51 votes. That seems to be the reason everyone is saying: Wait a minute. Let's get an agreement so we can move it through.

That is what I always heard and that is what I understand. They are afraid, basically, that if you vote for cloture—even though it is not the things you want or have been negotiated on—then the vote is 51, even with the 30 hours of curing. Then, it goes from there, and, then, we are back to where we have not had any negotiations because the majority has the control with 51 votes. That is what I think the fear is here.

The problem we have in West Virginia right now is that you can throw all the money at Wall Street that you want to. You can continue to put trillions upon trillions there. People are afraid to leave their home. They are afraid because they are afraid of the healthcare. I have workers who don't have masks. I have healthcare workers who don't have gowns. I have hospitals that will not be open another 60 days because they don't have cash flow. It looks like we are worried more about the economy than the healthcare and well-being of the people.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. MANCHIN. Yes, sir.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Even if cloture were invoked, there are 30 more hours.

Mr. MANCHIN. We know about the 30 more hours.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask the Senator from West Virginia, in what way would your side be disadvantaged by that?

The American people are waiting for us to act today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Senator COLLINS has laid it out. We don't have time for this. We don't have time for it.

Mr. MANCHIN. Let me ask you a question.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I have a question. In what way would the Democratic minority be disadvantaged?

Mr. DURBIN. Who has control of the floor?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia has the floor.

Mr. MANCHIN. Sir, anything I am saying—30 hours or 30 days—as long as you have the majority, 51 votes rule. The final vote is going to be on passage, whether you have to negotiate or not with us.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. By firming a deal, we have to get cloture again once we got on the bill. In other words, this is cloture on the motion to proceed to the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Let me explain it to my good friend from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. I understand.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Here is the way it works, colleagues. We have been fiddling around, as the Senator from Maine pointed out, for 24 hours.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I have the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia has the floor.

Mr. MANCHIN. I know where you are coming from on this. We have a little difference of opinion about this.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I thank the Senator from West Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Colleagues, here is an understanding of where we are. We have been fiddling around for 2 days on the motion to proceed.

Mr. MANCHIN. If I could make my remarks.

Mr. DURBIN. Who has the floor?

Mr. MCCONNELL. My friend, if that were invoked, there are still 30 more hours postcloture on the motion to proceed.

Once you get on the bill, you have to go through it again. There is no way in which—

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. We should be able to get a bill that we can move forward on with unanimous consent. We really should. That is what I am hoping for. I think we can do it.

Let me go back to where I am coming from. My whole thing is based on the

healthcare right now. You can't throw enough money to fix this if you can't fix the healthcare. If you can't give my people in West Virginia and across this country the feeling that we have a treatment and we are moving forward on a vaccine, they are not leaving their homes. My restaurants aren't going to open up.

The most important thing is, How do we take care of the workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own because businesses have closed? It is the same in my State as in your State—through no fault of their own. That is the package we have to get out. We have \$160 billion moving right now—moving right now.

I am saying this: It looks like things are weighted toward the Wall Street corporations' side. True or false?

We are not in the frontlines. We are not one of the big four.

Many of us—100 of us—are not there negotiating at the table. Our staffs are all having input, and we are working on that. But sitting there and making the final decisions comes down to this: Can we give the confidence that we can rise to the occasion to keep the people healthy in our States? My hospitals need to stay open. My healthcare workers need to be healthy. They need to be protected.

It seems like we are talking about everything else about the economy versus the healthcare. That doesn't make any sense to me whatsoever.

For the people who aren't getting a check right now, we can get a check to them. We should.

It seems like we are more focused on the big corporations and the healthcare of Wall Street than we are on the healthcare of the people in rural America and Main Street. That is the problem I have had on this. That is the problem we have been talking about.

We want to fix this. I am not talking about all the regulations you are talking about. I don't know anything about that. I will find out if it is buried in the bill and it is not what I would approve right now if we don't need it. But if you are giving all of the preferences to the large corporations, they can shill and hide and do buybacks and everything else. Don't you think the American worker ought to get something or be protected in some way? That is what it is like.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, as the majority leader said, all this vote is about is, Shall we get on the bill? Can we debate the issue? Can we get together to decide what to do about what is the most significant healthcare crisis in a century in this State? Can we get on the bill? We are saying yes; they are saying no.

The distinguished Senator from West Virginia says: What about the people who need help? I have a friend who emailed me last night and said: It is too late; I am closing five small businesses.

These are little businesses.

Well, why did we not vote last night on this, because in this bill is the proposal by Senator COLLINS—Senator COLLINS, Republican; Senator CARDIN, Democrat; Senator RUBIO, Republican; Senator SHAHEEN, Democrat—that would loan money to small businesses of less than 500 people so they can pay their employees in West Virginia and Tennessee. And then, if they did that, it would be forgiven. In other words, it is a grant. They could keep working. That is for the employees. Every day we wait, they don't get paid.

Pass this bill and the laid-off employees would be available for sick leave, which they weren't when the bill came over from the House. Pass this bill today and the employee who was laid off last week could be available for 2 weeks of sick leave at today's salary.

Pass this bill and most Americans would get \$1,200 per person, \$2,400 a couple, \$500 more for a child. They would get it one day sooner if you passed this bill last night.

These are not controversial proposals. On the Collins-Rubio-Cardin-Shaheen proposal, I happened to be watching Robert Reich, the former Labor Secretary for President Clinton, who is about as far to the left as anybody goes, and someone asked him: What would be the single best thing Congress could do to help workers get their money and be paid?

He said it is exactly what the Collins-Rubio-Cardin-Shaheen proposal would do—loan money to those with 500 or less and let them keep working.

As for this business about big corporations, Darden is a big corporation. It owns lots of restaurants. Gaylord is a big corporation. It owns Opryland. If it has a credit problem and the Federal Reserve Board can make sure that it has enough money to stay in business, all the people who work at the Grand Ole Opry can continue to have jobs. If they don't, they will be out of work. What is wrong with that?

I mean, that is the goal. Whether you work for a big company or a little company, you are still an American citizen—whether you work for FedEx or the local diner.

And as far as solving the problem of the disease—and then I will let others speak—pass this bill and 1 day sooner we would have \$10 billion to accelerate treatments. Treatments are what we need. We could accelerate vaccines. Vaccines are what we eventually need. Pass this bill and we would have \$75 billion for hospitals and \$10 billion for those diagnostic treatments I just mentioned. We would have \$1.7 billion to buy more masks.

All of that could happen 1 day sooner if the other side wasn't trying to attach its political agenda to a crisis bill. This is no time to be running a political campaign.

As the majority leader said, the House—dominated by Democrats—sent us their ideas. We passed it through without a single amendment, even

though we didn't agree with many of their ideas. We worked for days with our counterparts on the Democratic side and proposed a bill with their ideas, such as unemployment compensation, at \$600 per person. That is twice as much as you get in unemployment compensation without this bill in Tennessee.

Finally, I would say this: Pass this bill and 1 day sooner a Tennessee worker, instead of getting \$326, would get nearly \$1,000 if he or she has been laid off. There is no excuse for delaying getting on this bill. It is outrageous that it will happen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I think we all know what is happening here.

The leader pointed out in his opening remarks that everything was going really quite well. There were a lot of working groups that were meeting. There was great bipartisan cooperation. Both sides were getting ideas included in a plan. Then, yesterday, the Speaker of the House showed up with an agenda and, all of a sudden, it got taken over at the leadership level.

Now, instead of talking about helping workers, we are talking about the Green New Deal and all kinds of other things, including the demands unions and other special interest groups want to see in this deal.

Yet the throwaway line in this is about bailouts for big corporations. Really? Are we going to do that again? Are we going to do this again? You guys are going to come over here and block votes and use the line that this is a bailout for big corporations?

You heard what Senator ALEXANDER just said. This has money in here for workers. This has money for families. This has money for small businesses. It has lots of money, and \$300 billion is going to go to checks: \$1,200 per person, \$2,400 per couple, and \$500 per child, for everybody. There is up to \$75,000 for a single and \$150,000 for a married couple who is filing jointly. There is \$250 billion in here for unemployment insurance, as the Senator from Tennessee pointed out, in order to plus up and top off those unemployment funds that the States have, and we will add \$600 per person, per week for the next 3 months. That is going to help unemployed people in this country.

The Small Business Loan Program, which was just alluded to and which Senators RUBIO, COLLINS, CARDIN, and SHAHEEN have worked on, is a \$350 billion program that allows small businesses to pay their employees, to keep them employed so they keep their jobs and so those jobs don't go away. Right there, that is \$900 billion that will go to workers.

As Senator ALEXANDER pointed out, there is over \$242 billion in this bill that is going to help out with healthcare, and we all know we have to help our hospitals.

Between the \$75 billion in direct spending in this particular provision

and the \$25 billion or more that is going to be part of the Medicare provisions, that will be \$100 billion for hospitals; \$20 billion for veterans' healthcare; \$11 billion for vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics, and other preparedness needs; \$4.5 billion for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; \$1.7 billion for the Strategic National Stockpile; \$12 billion for the military; \$10 billion for block grants to States; \$12 billion for K–12 education; \$6 billion for higher education; \$5 billion for the FEMA Disaster Relief Fund; \$10 billion for the airports; and \$20 billion for public transportation emergency relief.

All told, there is \$242 billion—\$186 billion, I might add, which will go to the States. Everybody talks about helping out the States. There is \$186 billion of the \$242 billion in this part of the bill that will go to the States.

So there is \$900 billion and another \$250 billion. You are looking at \$1.2 trillion to \$1.3 trillion, roughly, of this bill that will be going to healthcare workers, hospitals, medical providers, families, employees, and unemployed people. That is where it will go.

Yes, there is \$500 billion in here to keep industries afloat that are failing, and they are failing by the day and shedding jobs by the day. These aren't grants—although, the Democrats did want some grants in here, I might add. These are loans. These have to be paid back. Bailouts usually apply to those who did something dumb on their own, who made bad business decisions. These companies aren't in trouble because of something they did on their own. This is no fault of their own. They are in trouble because they have been shut down, and they all hire millions of employees in this country. So, yes, we probably need to do something to help businesses in this country so they can keep working and keep their employees working.

This was put together with a lot of bipartisan input. The leader appointed task forces, and the Democratic leader assigned people to task forces. I observed those meetings and the discussions that went on. They were bipartisan. I participated in some of those. They were bipartisan, and we came together. All of these things that have been put together in this plan were developed with an idea toward getting help to workers, employees, small businesses, healthcare professionals—the people who are fighting the crisis on the frontline. Yet here we are, dillydallying around, and we can't even get on the bill.

As the leader pointed out, there is another 60-vote threshold that comes later. If you want to block it then, you can block it then. We can't even get on the bill. The country is burning. The country is burning, and your side wants to play political games.

It is time to get this done. The American people expect us to act. They need action. We need to work together to get this done for the American people.

Do not come out here and say over and over and over again that this is a bailout for big corporations. This bill is about workers. It is about people. It is about families. It is about people who are hurting out there economically, and we need to do something about it. We are in a position to do something about it, and it is high time that we did.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to suggest to my friends on both sides of the aisle that we first assume the appropriate distance and then, secondly, that we take a deep breath. The emotions we have seen on the floor on both sides of the aisle are reflected in homes across America, where families are very emotional at this moment as we face this public health crisis. It is no surprise that it is reflected on the floor of the Senate. We are going to solve this problem, and we are going to do it in a timely way, which the American people expect of us.

We have had two measures now that have come before us—one for \$8 billion and another for \$100 billion—that were addressed on a bipartisan basis with an agreement. This will be as well.

Now, as for this argument that we can't spare 1 minute, that we can't spare 1 day, I understand the sense of urgency.

The House of Representatives passed the second bill, the \$100 billion bill, in the early morning hours of Saturday. When did the Senate pass the bill? It passed it on Wednesday—more than 4 days later.

With regard to this \$100 billion bill, which included medical leave, accelerated access to unemployment compensation, food, new Medicaid payments to States, a guarantee that you would never have to pay for a test, the Republican leader waited 4 days to call that bill. His argument was, Wait a minute; the paperwork is not here. Well, I checked on that because the Senator from Idaho raised it on the floor, and it turns out that, as we have many, many times—and we were prepared here—by consent, you can move on a measure before the paper actually comes across from the other body.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, will the Senator from Illinois yield for an inquiry?

Mr. DURBIN. I will yield.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, isn't it a fact, when the Senator was up here talking and demanding that we pass that bill, that the bill wasn't here? I have spent 40 years in the Senate, and I have never been able to convince a Parliamentarian that we should vote on a House bill that wasn't here. It wasn't here. The Republicans aren't in charge of the House; it is the Democrats. NANCY PELOSI is in charge of the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader has the floor.

The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I might say to my friend from Idaho that it is not unusual for us to move on a measure before the bill, the paper, has come across the rotunda. We do it by consent. Yes, it happens here, and we were prepared to do it again.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader has the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if time remains on the Republicans' side, they can use it as they wish.

Mr. COTTON. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I will not yield at this moment. I want to finish my comment as I allowed the Senator from South Dakota to finish his. I hope the Senator from Arkansas will show me that respect. Thank you.

Measures that have been raised this morning are important measures, and for the most part, my colleagues are pushing an open door.

The Rubio-Cardin plan is one that I support. It is supported on a bipartisan basis. I think it is an excellent idea for dealing with the challenges of restaurants and small businesses. I support it. There is no issue in terms of whether that will be included in the final package. I believe it will, and I certainly hope it will.

As for the notion of cash payments that was brought to us by the White House, I don't hear any objection whatsoever on the Democratic side of the aisle to it.

With regard to the notion of extending unemployment insurance and providing additional benefits within unemployment insurance, I guess we are going to argue as to who came up with the idea first, but both sides agree on that basic idea.

So these proposals that have been brought before us are not in controversy, as I understand it, in the negotiations that are underway. The thing that I was concerned about and that Senator SCHUMER addressed—and Senator MANCHIN raised the same issue—was really focusing on the threshold issue of the capacity of our healthcare system to deal with this public health crisis.

When we heard the Governor of New York this morning suggest that the hospitals of that State will have to increase their capacity by 50 percent and that it will still not be enough, it is a suggestion to all of us that we need to start with healthcare and hospitals. It was our feeling that the bill Senator MCCONNELL tried to move yesterday was not adequate. It didn't provide the necessary resources for that. When we return to this measure—it has been said by Senator SCHUMER and others that it could be today, and I pray that it will be—I think you will find additional resources for hospitals and healthcare. In my State, that is a critical element.

Let me also talk about the fact that we are dealing with a bill of great importance and great magnitude. Reflect

for a moment that the amount of money we are talking about in this bill is roughly equivalent to the entire Federal Government's domestic discretionary budget in 1 year. We are dealing with this bill, as we should, on an urgent basis. We should take care to make sure we do the best we can but to not wait for the perfect. Let's make sure we have something that is good and responsive to the needs we have.

I also think that the measure yesterday that was pushed by Senator MCCONNELL did not provide adequate resources to State and local governments. When I talk to my Governor in Illinois, Governor Pritzker, they are spending money in ways they never dreamed of in order to deal with this public health crisis. They are also seeing more unemployment insurance benefits being claimed than we ever have in our history. We need to help the State and local governments, and that was one of the objections we had to the bill yesterday. We didn't feel that it was adequate.

When it comes to corporations and providing help to businesses, large and small, count me in. I am one of those Democrats who stood for the stimulus package that President Obama brought before us because I thought it was necessary. I still believe we did the right thing in passing that stimulus package when many on the other side of the aisle did not. Part of that package helped larger corporations, and so be it, for I thought that was necessary. Yet we learned a bitter lesson. Many times, the benefits being given to those corporations and the tax breaks being given to them translated into stock buybacks, whereby they took the money and ran. We don't want that to happen again.

Arguing for transparency and accountability on the money that goes to any business, large or small, is not unreasonable, and it used to be bipartisan. We are arguing over that, debating over that, and negotiating over that at this minute.

Let me also say that I continue to be amazed at the references to the Speaker of the House, NANCY PELOSI. She really unnerves a lot of people on that side of the aisle. She is the Speaker of the House, you know, and the measure—whatever we do here—will be headed over there for consideration. The fact that she would want to be party to that negotiation is not an outrageous idea. It happens to be consistent with the bicameral system of government that we have.

The Senator from Kentucky got up and talked about how she came into the meeting and ruined the whole meeting by asserting herself as the Speaker of the House. It is reasonable for her to do that. In fact, the suggestion by Senator SCHUMER at the outset was that we have the four corners—the four leaders, the Democrats and Republicans—and a representative of the White House for this negotiation. That approach was rejected by the Senator

from Kentucky. We will do our own, he says. We will get back to you when we have a Republican plan. It was not bipartisan from the start, and it should be all the way. It is the only way it will work.

Let me say for a moment that if and when we have reached an agreement—and I pray that it will be done under the circumstances—and if and when we vote for cloture on the motion to proceed, at that point, the Senator from Kentucky can offer any amendment he wishes. At that point, I hope that we will have an agreement and that we will all agree to do it in a quick fashion. Yet this idea that it is going to be instantaneous as soon as we vote for the motion on cloture on the motion to proceed is not a fact, and it hasn't been for a long time.

Let me just conclude by making an observation on something related to our meeting here today and what is going on in the United States of America. Five of our Members did not vote yesterday on the Republican side of the aisle. One has been diagnosed as having COVID-19, and the other four are self-quarantining because of the concern about their own health, which is natural. It is naive for us to believe this will be the end of this challenge to our membership.

I implore Senators to consider the bipartisan measure that Senator PORTMAN and I have offered for remote voting. We should not be physically present on this floor at this moment. We know better, and our staff is subjected to whatever we bring on the floor in terms of viral load. Let's think about this in human terms. Too many of our colleagues and their families are falling prey to this disease. We should change the rules of the Senate to reflect humanity and reality. It is the 21st century. Voting in a remote fashion, as I have suggested with Senator PORTMAN, is the best way, I think, to protect us and our families from further problems from a health viewpoint.

Let me close by saying a final word on this. Senator SCHUMER came to the floor and didn't say, with arms crossed, we are stonewalling. He said he had to leave the floor to go back and negotiate. With whom? He left the floor to negotiate with the Republican leaders from the White House and, perhaps, from other places. That is the way it should be.

We are going to get this done today. Take a deep breath. Everybody is emotional at this moment on both sides of the aisle, but we have a job to do, and we are going to get it done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). For the information of the Members, the majority has approximately 14 minutes, and the minority has 15 minutes.

Which Member seeks recognition?

The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I have been here for 5 years. I came from another world, one in which, to get any-

thing done, you had to compromise. The problem we have today is that I can't find any partners with whom to compromise.

This bill has been characterized as another bailout for large corporations. Really? That is the most amazing characterization I could hear today.

When I look at this, what this bill is focused on is the American worker, who, in the time we have been debating this morning here, thousands have had phone calls given to them today by their employer to say: We are sorry, but because of the liquidity situation we have, there is no demand for our products or services. We need you to go home.

That has been going on now for weeks, while we sit up here and talk and blame each other for things.

The time for action is right now. This bill gives us an opportunity to bring over almost \$2 trillion of liquidity to the American people who are in need. This is not about Big Business. As a matter of fact, I don't see any grants in here. What I see are liquidity opportunities so employers can keep their relationship with the employees.

We have already heard the details today: direct payments of \$300 billion directly to individuals, \$250 billion for 3 months of unemployment insurance—unprecedented—\$350 billion going directly to small businesses. Why? So that they can keep their employees employed, even if they are furloughed.

There are \$500 billion being made available for loans through our banking community. This is federally guaranteed loans. These are not grants. These are not moneys that are going to go to the boards and the executives and all that. This is money that is going for the purpose of getting directly to payroll.

There are \$517 billion of tax deferrals on withholding taxes on the corporate side. That is a 1-year deferral. That is not a guarantee; it is not a grant.

There are \$250 billion of other moneys, 180 of which is going to cities and municipalities and States.

And I agree with the assistant leader of the Democratic Party that we might need to do more for our States, and let's get to it, if that is the biggest issue here, but that is not the biggest issue. There are so many of these other things that are being thrown in this bill because it is a big bill; it is unprecedented.

But let me just say this: What we have done is try to make this a situation where we can avoid a liquidity crisis causing an insolvency crisis, and that is the most damaging thing we can do to the American worker.

At the end of the day, the American worker has something that they all have in common. They have an employer. That employer is made up of investors, just like you and I, who invest in those companies who employ these people.

This is not a government employing 150 million people in our workforce.

This is about getting the American economy a bridge—and that is all this is, is a bridge to weather this medical crisis that we have.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments from the Senator from Georgia. There are plenty of negotiations going on. I don't know what he means when he says he doesn't have anybody to negotiate with. I just spent 2 hours with Secretary Mnuchin talking about provisions of this bill.

We spent hours on Friday and Saturday talking within our committees. I applaud Senator RUBIO, what he and Senator CARDIN did. There has been bipartisanship but not from the majority leader, and that has really fundamentally been the problem—the Republican leader.

Let's back up. Let's back up 10 days. I stood on this floor—Senator DURBIN was here, a bunch of us—when Senator MCCONNELL on a Thursday night, we were this close to agreement with the House on the second package, the one that had sick leave policy. We were that close.

Senator MCCONNELL decided he had to go back to Kentucky to go to a political event with a Justice of the Supreme Court—a political event with a Justice of the Supreme Court.

Mr. COTTON. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. BROWN. Of course.

Mr. COTTON. When did the Senate receive that bill from the House?

Mr. BROWN. That is not the point. The point is that—

Mr. COTTON. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. BROWN. Certainly.

Mr. COTTON. Will you answer my question? When did we receive that bill?

Mr. BROWN. I don't know the day, but I know it was a day or two later.

Mr. COTTON. Where has the House been for the last week?

Mr. BROWN. I am not yielding now, Senator COTTON. I know you always want to do Trump's—the President's bidding. I have the floor, and I will keep the floor.

The fact is, we were in negotiations with Speaker PELOSI, I assume with Leader MCCARTHY. In the Senate, we were this close to legislation.

Senator MCCONNELL went home. Senator COTTON is not disputing the fact he went home for a political event with a Justice of the Supreme Court, for gosh sakes—went home.

We didn't vote Friday. We didn't vote Saturday. We didn't vote Sunday. We didn't vote Monday. We didn't vote Tuesday. We didn't vote until Wednesday. So we have tried to be bipartisan.

Senator MCCONNELL then dispatched all of us just a few days ago to do negotiations within our committees. I sat with—

Mr. ALEXANDER. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. BROWN. Well, I would like to sort of explain the details, but if the

time comes out of your time, I would be glad to.

Mr. ALEXANDER. My question will be short.

Is it not true that the bill to which the Senator refers was still being written over the weekend, and it would have been impossible for the U.S. Senate to vote on it before Monday?

Mr. BROWN. No. The answer to that question is no. It would have been possible. We can always suspend the rules and move if it is in the national interest.

But we didn't vote—you know this, Senator ALEXANDER—we didn't vote until Wednesday.

But let me back up. This weekend Senator CRAPO and I and Banking Committee Members were making progress on Friday and Saturday. Then Saturday night, Senator MCCONNELL decided that he would take everything back and write a partisan bill. So don't tell us that this has been a bipartisan effort.

Again, Senator RUBIO and Senator CARDIN had some bipartisan efforts. We attempted that, but the fact is, we need to learn from 10 years ago. The same people came to us and said: We need this bailout. They promised that it would help people stay in their homes. They promised it would be money in the pockets of workers.

The banks have done well, the executives have done well, but since then, wages have basically remained flat. The American people don't want another corporate bailout. They don't want a bailout for Wall Street. They don't want a bailout for the airlines. They want money—if we are going to do a relief package, the money needs to go in the pockets of workers.

We know that hundreds of people, thousands of people in each of our States are faced every day with this situation: Do I go to work? I am sick today. Do I go to work and possibly infect somebody else in the workplace or do I stay home and lose the pay I need in order to pay my mortgage or in order to pay my rent?

This plan is all about a corporate bailout. The money—\$425 billion that the Secretary of Treasury can decide is a slush fund or where to direct that money instead of money going to workers, to food banks, to unemployment insurance, to sick days policy, to all of the things that we need to do to keep businesses going and people in their homes.

We have a prohibition that so far Senator MCCONNELL has objected to on foreclosures and evictions. You all know the statistics—40 percent of Americans don't have \$400 discretionary money in their pockets that they can use in an emergency to fix their car or whatever.

If they go several weeks without pay, they will be evicted; they will be foreclosed on. We need Senator MCCONNELL to actually agree to that.

And when it comes to the \$425 billion slush fund, we want to help these busi-

nesses, especially small businesses. We want to help the airlines, but we need to make sure that this money passes through to employees. That means no corporate bailouts without investing in the dignity of work; it means if you are taking taxpayer money, no stock buybacks, no sending jobs overseas, no outsourcing your jobs to independent contractors, no golden parachutes for executives, no using taxpayer dollars to bust unions, no wage cuts for these employees, no healthcare or pension cuts.

If we put money into these businesses, this money is there not for the executives; it is there for the workers, and it is there for the community. It means actually helping people stay in their homes.

If you love this country, you fight for the people who make it work. We have to show the people we serve that we have learned from Congress's mistake 10 years ago when the banks did very well, thank you. And Wall Street again will do very well, thank you, under the McConnell plan.

We have to come together to put money in people's pockets. We need to help people stay in their homes. We need to invest in healthcare workers who are on the frontlines. We need to mobilize American manufacturers.

The partisan McConnell plan doesn't do this. The bipartisan work we are trying to do could do this. We know we can get through this together, put this partisanship aside, and come together for the people whom we serve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I would defer to the Senator from Tennessee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from North Dakota. I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will state the inquiry.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the discussion we just heard was about when the Senate could have voted on H.R. 6201, which was the bill that came over from the House.

When did that bill from the House of Representatives arrive in the U.S. Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It came to the Senate on Tuesday, the 17th.

Mr. ALEXANDER. On Tuesday, the 17th.

And my second question is, Could the U.S. Senate have voted on that bill before it arrived from the House of Representatives?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It would take consent. The Senate has done it on several occasions. In one case, H.R. 3630, the Middle Class Tax Relief & Job Creation Act; another case, H.R. 2194, Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Investment Act. It would take consent.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Did anyone ask consent that it be voted on before Wednesday?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair does not have any record of a request for consent.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank the Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I believe I have the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I want to talk about the bill that we want to vote on right now and why it is so important that we pass it.

For my part, what I work on is support for our farmers and our ranchers, and that is exactly what we have put in this bill is help and support for our farmers and ranchers, for rural America.

And yet, my understanding is that Democrats are objecting to the help and support that we have put in this bill for our farmers and ranchers.

Last week, the Department of Homeland Security recognized that agriculture—our supply of food, fiber, and feed—is one of our Nation's critical industries. Our country has been blessed with an abundant, affordable, and safe food supply that we rarely stop to notice but that we depend on every single day and we certainly depend on at this time with this pandemic.

The good news is, our farmers and ranchers, our ag sector, are out there working every day, carrying on this critical work of ensuring that we have the food on our grocery shelves throughout this pandemic.

The bad news is, the farm economy, already facing a number of years of declining income, has taken a further nosedive on account of the coronavirus. So we have put forward assistance to make sure we address that.

Let me just give you one example, though, of the difficulty faced in farm country, in rural America.

The cattle industry has lost between \$7 billion and \$9 billion over the last 2 months—over the last 2 months—and that is just one sector of our ag economy.

Congress needs to act, and we need to act now, to ensure that farmers, ranchers, and rural America—farmers, ranchers, and rural America—receive the relief they desperately need.

Why would Democrats object to that? Why would they object to that?

We included two important provisions to ensure that rural America and our farm and ranch families receive assistance.

First, we replenish the Commodity Credit Corporation, making sure that the CCC has the funding necessary to carry out the farm bill, including the farm safety net, conservation programs, trade programs, as well as emergency and ad hoc programs like the Market Facilitation Program.

Second, we increase CCC authority to ensure that we can meet the coronavirus impact on agriculture head-on. That makes sense. That is in the bill. They are objecting to it. They are objecting. This is our food supply. This is our food chain.

We also included an important provision that enables USDA to provide critical support to ranchers during this market downturn—to ranchers. However, the Senate Democrats are objecting to that provision. Congressional Democratic leadership has objected to helping our farmers and ranchers in this relief package.

The bill also includes an additional \$15.5 billion for the SNAP program—for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, for food stamps—to provide nutrition assistance for those affected by this economic downturn.

I urge my colleagues to get on board and support our farmers, our ranchers, and our food supply. Support rural America. Quit objecting to rural America. Quit objecting to our farmers and ranchers. We can't let that happen. We have talked about the importance of the bill. It is important for our entire country, and it is certainly important for our farmers and for our ranchers and for the food supply—the lowest cost, highest quality food supply that they provide every single American every single day.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President.

Mr. TILLIS. The majority has 5 minutes. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you, Mr. President.

Do you know what the American people are thinking right now? They are thinking that the brain is an amazing organ. It starts working in a mother's womb, and it doesn't stop working until you get elected to Congress.

Do you know what the American people are thinking right now? They are thinking that this country was founded by geniuses, but it is being run by a bunch of idiots.

Do you know what the American people are thinking right now? They are thinking, Why do the Members of the U.S. Senate continue to double down on stupid? This is not a Republican bill, Mr. Chairman; this is a bipartisan bill. We have spent hours and hours and hours negotiating these provisions with our Democratic friends.

This is not a slush fund. This bill to help people and businesses in America. This bill is going to increase unemployment insurance. This bill is going to send \$1,200 to every man and woman in America—taxpayers who make less than \$75,000 a year—and \$500 for each of their children.

This bill is going to help every small business in this country. It is not a bailout. It provides up to \$350 billion for small businesses for the next 8 weeks to keep them going, and if they don't lay anybody off, the bill provides that the loans are forgiven.

We have some businesses in this country that are bigger than 500 employees. This bill has a provision to help them, too, as well. In the America I was raised in, growing your business and becoming as large as possible was something we aspired to.

This bill does not create a slush fund for the Treasury Secretary. It provides

\$75 billion to help some of our industries hardest hit in a collateralized loan, not a bailout, and then provides another \$425 billion to the Federal Reserve under section 13(3) of the Federal Reserve Act, which the Federal Reserve will make available to all businesses, including those that don't qualify as a small business. It is not a gift. We can negotiate warrants; we can negotiate stock options; we can take a piece of their company in stock.

I don't understand it. I get politics; I have been around it my whole life. But there comes a time when we have to stop thinking about the next election and start thinking about the next generation.

What are we going to leave to our children if we allow this economy to crash? And it is happening as we speak. I mean no ill will toward my Democratic friends. I like and respect every one of them. But let's pass this bill.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MURPHY. Objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection by the Senator from Connecticut is heard.

There is less than 10 minutes remaining.

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, you can't keep on saying it is a bipartisan bill when it clearly is not. If it were a bipartisan bill, you wouldn't have this level of angst from the Democrats who were shut out of the process.

Let's be clear about what we are talking about here. We don't think your bill works. We don't think the bill that has been drafted by the majority party is going to fix the problem. This is a policy disagreement, and I have an obligation as a representative of my State to stand up and say when I don't think a \$2 trillion bill is going to fix the problem. It may make a lot of people rich, but it doesn't have the resources in it today to take care of the most vulnerable in this country, and it is not going to do the primary job at hand, which is to stop the virus.

Remember, there is no amount of economic stimulus we can pass—\$1 trillion, \$2 trillion, \$3 trillion—that will solve this problem if we don't get serious about the public health crisis that exists today. When you shortchange States, when you don't provide enough money to help my State and my municipalities manage testing, move congregate populations apart from each other, and try to manage the crisis, then you aren't serious about stopping the virus. Yes, one of the outstanding issues in this bill is that we think we need more funding for the States and municipalities that are on the frontlines of fighting the virus. Yes, we don't think this bill will work—will work—at job No. 1, which is stopping the public health crisis, unless we provide ample funding. And, yes, we are worried about the lack of conditionality on funding to big businesses, to

Wall Street. Yes, we are worried about the fact that this is going to make rich people much richer and, at the same time, not actually stop the public health crisis.

These are policy differences. Instead of coming down here and having showboat after showboat, we should be sitting together trying to resolve differences that, frankly, I don't think are so large that they can't be solved within the next several hours.

I just hope we understand that we are down here very frustrated because we worry that we are about to vote on a bill that is not going to solve the problem. That is a policy disagreement but a policy disagreement that can be resolved.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, how much time is remaining on our side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 5½ minutes.

Mr. DURBIN. I yield to the Senator from Montana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, during the past couple of weeks, I have been talking to Montanans about their needs as we deal with this coronavirus. Healthcare officials tell me that folks on the frontlines need more masks, more protective equipment, and, quite frankly, this bill does not get that done. It helps, but it doesn't get it done. Small businesses and their employees are telling me that they need immediate access to relief. This bill doesn't do that because, quite frankly, we need more on the front end on bridge loans. Tax credits are great, but you have to be in business to be able to take advantage of those. Mayors and local city officials are worried that if they can't keep up with the mounting needs their communities are facing, this bill fails them. Tribal leaders across Montana have made it clear to me and to other folks in this body that they are largely and unfortunately ignored in the bill before us.

This bill is nearly \$2 trillion. One of the things it does do, and I know there are folks on the floor right now who disagree, but the fact is, massive corporations through that \$500 billion slush fund, which, I might add, has very little, if any, transparency or accountability—it goes to those folks.

Look, I think all of us agree that \$2 trillion is a lot of money. It is all borrowed money, and if there is ever a time to borrow money, it is in economic times like these, but this needs to be a targeted, temporary support to keep our economy going.

As the Senator from Connecticut said, the fact is that this bill, particularly this slush fund, is not a good use of taxpayer money. It would allow an unelected official with no accountability to the American people to dole out \$500 billion while hiding the receipts for months, if not longer.

I know there are Senators who say: Well, they can get warrants for these loans. They must get warrants for these loans.

These companies can take advantage of hundreds of billions of dollars of this money and continue to lay off some of those same taxpayers who are supporting them through their taxes.

Montanans know we can do better, and they expect better. Working together, I am going to tell you, we can get this done. There isn't a person in this body who hasn't filled a leadership position outside of their service to the U.S. Senate. You know that you need to negotiate and you need to compromise. If that is done and it is done in good faith, we will have a bill before the day is done.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I can give you a very long list to describe everything we are doing here to help small business people in this country, our hospitals, personal protective equipment.

Let me say this. This bill was written by both Democrats and Republicans in good faith. It is time to get over our differences and put our country before ourselves. Let's come together and vote this bill out of the Senate now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, how much time remains on our side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 2 minutes 40 seconds.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me just say, strike a responsible distance and take a deep breath. We are going to pass this bill—not the one that Senator MCCONNELL brought before us yesterday but a version of that, which I think is a dramatic improvement.

My prayer is that bill is going to include even more money than the McConnell bill when it comes to dealing with the healthcare crisis we face and the challenge we face—more money for hospitals, more money for providers, and more money for equipment, and we are going to have to come back again, I am sorry to say, if this continues, to make sure we put even greater investment in the men and women who will save our lives across this country.

Secondly, we want to make certain that this McConnell bill is improved when it comes to accountability for the taxpayer dollars given to the largest corporations in America. Some of us feel burned by what has happened with some of those corporations in the past when we trusted their leadership to build their companies and help their employees, but, instead, they built up their own bank accounts at the expense of their employees. We don't want to return to those days. I am sure the Republicans don't either. We want language in this bill that moves this in the direction of accountability and transparency when it comes to spending taxpayers' dollars by major corporations.

Third, never overlook the need of State and local governments. They

have been waiting, begging, and pleading with the administration in the White House to give national leadership. Absent that, they have taken on the responsibility themselves. They are asking us to stand behind them as they make these difficult decisions, State by State by State, because the White House refuses to make these same decisions. We need to provide the resources to do that. State and local governments need that help, and I believe the McConnell bill could be improved by providing more resources in that regard.

There are so many bipartisan things that we do agree upon in this bill. Let's get these things right. As Senator MURPHY of Connecticut said, if we don't get it right in terms of dealing with the coronavirus, we can't put enough money on the table for economic recovery. Let's do it.

I am sorry we are going to this roll call. It is not an indication of the progress that I believe has been made since yesterday in negotiating a bipartisan approach to improving the McConnell bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mr. DURBIN. I think it is time to recognize that.

Thank you.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 157, H.R. 748, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, Mike Rounds, Mitt Romney, James E. Risch, Lamar Alexander, Steve Daines, Kevin Cramer, Tim Scott, Martha McSally, Deb Fischer, Marco Rubio, John Boozman, James Lankford, Rob Portman, Tom Cotton.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 748, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage, shall be brought to a close upon reconsideration?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the order.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 78 Leg.]

YEAS—49

Alexander	Ernst	Perdue
Barrasso	Fischer	Portman
Blackburn	Graham	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeben	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Johnson	Shelby
Collins	Jones	Sullivan
Cornyn	Kennedy	Thune
Cotton	Lankford	Tillis
Cramer	Loeffler	Toomey
Crapo	McConnell	Wicker
Cruz	McSally	Young
Daines	Moran	
Enzi	Murkowski	

NAYS—46

Baldwin	Hassan	Sanders
Bennet	Heinrich	Schatz
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schumer
Booker	Kaine	Shaheen
Brown	King	Sinema
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Cardin	Leahy	Stabenow
Carper	Manchin	Tester
Casey	Markey	Udall
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Peters	Wyden
Gillibrand	Reed	
Harris	Rosen	

NOT VOTING—5

Gardner	Paul	Scott of Florida
Lee	Romney	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 46.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative upon reconsideration, the motion is rejected.

MIDDLE CLASS HEALTH BENEFITS TAX REPEAL ACT OF 2019—Motion to Proceed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 748, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 157, H.R. 748, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for the information of our colleagues on both sides, as a result of this procedural obstruction, let me explain where we are.

By refusal to allow us to take this first step, which would have still given them plenty of time to negotiate, we have put the Senate in the following position: If any 1 of the 100 of us chooses to object, we can't deal with this until Friday or Saturday at the earliest. If any 1 of the 100 of us objects to some of the procedural hurdles we have to overcome as a result of this mindless obstruction—absolutely mindless obstruction going on on the other side, while the public is waiting for us to

act, while people are losing their jobs, losing their income, and shutting down the economy, which we have had to do to deal with this public health crisis, they are fiddling around with Senate procedure that could, if 1 Senator objected, take us all the way to the end of the week to solve this problem.

I am beginning to think our Democratic colleagues don't understand the procedure in the Senate. I am not sure you understand the position your leader has put you in. He loses nothing—nothing—in terms of negotiating leverage by letting us get through these procedural hoops sooner rather than later—sooner rather than later.

The American people have had enough of this nonsense. They wonder where we are. They are looking to us to solve this problem.

The Secretary of the Treasury keeps going into the Democratic leader's office, and the list keeps getting longer and longer and longer. The bazaar is apparently open on the other side. Never let a crisis go to waste, one former President's Chief of Staff famously said.

So, look, I hope my colleagues will come out here and express themselves in the course of the afternoon. The American people would like to hear from us. They would like to know what is going on here. So let's tell them.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, we are at an odd spot right now not just as a Senate but as a nation. We have millions of people who are gathered in their own homes, trying to figure out what is going to happen next, waiting for a virus to die down. We have people in a hospital who are afraid because there is no tested treatment yet. We have firefighters; we have law enforcement; we have hospital workers all with not enough personal protection equipment because they do not know who is a citizen without the virus and who is a citizen with the virus.

The most basic elements of decision making of how you take care of your neighbor have become a distraction across the country as Americans have become afraid of a stranger and of a friend. This is a huge shift in where we are as a country. What this demands is immediate action. Three weeks ago, the Senate and the House passed \$8.3 billion, and we did it with an overwhelming bipartisan support, to add additional funding for diagnostics, for testing, and for rapid work on a vaccine. All of that work is advancing quickly. We have human trials on a vaccine happening right now because

we came together, and there weren't extra things added to it. We focused in on the problem, which is the virus.

This body has a lot of things we disagree on, there is no question. There are lots of moments to debate the things we disagree on, but this is a time we need to focus in on what is the problem, and the problem is dealing with COVID-19. There was a bipartisan bill that was put together in the Senate.

A week ago today, Senator SCHUMER released a 10-page list of—here are the things the Democrats would like from the Senate. It was a 10-page, very detailed list. Twenty-eight of those items on that list are included in this bipartisan bill—28 items from it, of that 10-page list of items. So much of that list that was released a week ago is included in this bipartisan bill.

Republican chairmen and Democratic ranking members of the committees of jurisdiction met and talked about this. The chairman and the ranking member of Appropriations worked together on an appropriations package for a quarter of a trillion dollars on just that one section that they worked on together to get resolution. Put all of those items together, and let me tell you what I mean by that: \$250 billion dealing with things as distant to believe as things like getting Peace Corps volunteers back home, away from where they are now. We have to get them back home and away from harm's way. There is funding in there for that as well as \$88 billion for hospitals, trying to help them through this; help for nursing homes; help for individual firefighters and their departments; \$10 billion for community development block grants to help cities as they are rapidly trying to work through this process—\$250 billion allocated just to things like that to help people get testing, personal equipment, travel and additional expenses, teleworking capabilities that have to be done for cities and communities and Federal entities. All of those things were put together and agreed upon.

There is a lot of work on the medical side, rightfully so. Testing makes a world of difference on this. Getting access to a vaccine—there are billions of dollars in that particular area. All of that is included in this proposal.

In addition to that, there are direct payments that we had agreed upon to send out, literally, to every American. We had set up \$1,200 for every American to receive. That is a stopgap method to help folks who are having trouble with their utilities or whatever it may be, or extra expenses so they will have something.

It was not just that for the individuals. It was also unemployment insurance. This is something the Republicans and Democrats had worked on together, to do a plus-up of unemployment insurance because we have millions of people suddenly unemployed with no advanced warning at all.

There is a significant increase of unemployment insurance that is built

into this, about \$250 billion additional that is put into that amount. Small businesses—the goal is not to have people on unemployment; the goal is to have people employed. A very creative thing was built into this that I happen to be a part of in the design, and that was small businesses—a business with 500 or fewer employees—could actually apply for a rapid loan. That loan would be given to them quickly. If they used it for payroll, it would be forgiven entirely. If they used it for their lease, it would be forgiven entirely. The goal was to not have small business go out of business and to keep employees currently connected to their company, not to put them out on unemployment but to keep them employed so they have the same system. So when we get through this virus, which we hope we do soon—they still have the same job, they are not on unemployment and later looking for a job. They are able to keep their same job. We thought that was very significant. It is a brandnew strategy for how to do this. It is a much better idea than just pushing people on unemployment—although, we do have great aid for unemployment. That program is \$350 billion.

As I have already laid out: healthcare, hospital, first responders—that is the first piece of this—working on testing, vaccines. The second piece is direct payments to individuals, direct payments for unemployment insurance, and then assistance for small businesses to stay in business and help their employees stay connected to their business, and then, on top of that, loans for the largest businesses in America. It is not a bailout—loans for the largest businesses in America.

My Democratic colleagues keep saying over and over again that this is a bailout for the biggest companies. It is loans for the largest companies because—you know what—they employ a lot of people, and we would like those businesses to also stay in business.

All of that seemed to be going well and negotiating well until the last 36 hours when it suddenly blows up. Here is what I heard first: It is not enough. It is \$2 trillion. It is \$2 trillion. It is suddenly: Well, it is not enough. We need to plus this up to be even bigger.

And then suddenly it has become this whole transition into the most random of things: Well, if a corporation gets a loan from the Federal Government, then someone here in Washington, DC, should determine how that corporation is run. We should have a member on their board or a union representative on their board. We should have some kind of stake in their board to do that. This was my favorite one. We should be able to tell the board, if they are considering layoffs, someone here in DC should be able to go to the company, evaluate the rest of their portfolio and tell them other ways they can do their business besides laying people off. Are you kidding me? We are now going to create a whole new Federal bureaucracy that goes to every company, and

if they take out a loan in this program, they are able to tell them how to manage the day-to-day operations of their company.

There was a requirement that every company had to do a \$15 minimum wage for their company. There was a requirement they couldn't do stock buybacks. By the way, I have no problem with prohibiting the use of these loan dollars to use for stock buybacks, but that is not the concept. The concept was for the next 10 years, you can't ever do stock buybacks on anything, regardless if it is with these loan funds.

It became this bizarre shift into—oh, we have an opportunity to run every company in America and tell them how to operate, and that became the goal. Then it became—we need to also add solar grants. The latest proposal that just came out today was \$600 million for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for Humanity—\$600 million. It is not connected to anything COVID; it was just that they need a plus-up of an additional \$600 million for the National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities.

The other one was that we need to have a forgiveness of all debt for the post office, ever—all post office debt. That was just released today.

The list is going on and on. My frustration is that I have people at home who are suffering, with small businesses teetering on the edge, about to go out of business, trying to figure out if there is going to be a proposal to come out of the Senate while folks are discussing whether we need to do more solar grants and if we are going to take over corporate boards and require a \$15 minimum wage at the end of this.

Can we just deal with COVID-19? Can we just deal with one thing, with COVID-19, to say, Let's help businesses and workers and families who are struggling? That is what I thought we were trying to do with this bill, but now suddenly it seems to be everything but. Let's just do that, and then there is plenty of time to argue about the other issues. We can do those in the future. We will have the debate on solar panels, I promise, but let's deal with COVID-19 and the families and individuals who are struggling and stop holding everything up, trying to add one more thing in to say: It is a really big bill. I am going to try to get my one piece.

One thing we worked on in a bipartisan way—Senator COONS and I—was this one area of not-for-profits. The not-for-profits are part of our social safety net. Our communities are put together by our families, and the people who walk alongside our families are local nonprofits. When those can't meet the needs, then government steps in to meet the needs. Our nonprofits are teetering on the edge right now. This bill allows the nonprofits to be a part of this whole focus on small businesses being able to get a loan and sus-

tain their personnel. It also allows individuals who want to donate to local nonprofits to write that off as an incentive for folks to be more engaged in that. This is a reasonable proposal on how to help. It is a bipartisan solution that Senator COONS and I have, but we can't get to it and vote on it because we being held up by some bizarre new thing that is thrown in every couple of hours that is unrelated to COVID-19 or the perpetual statement of: It is only \$2 trillion. It is not enough.

This government is not even set up to distribute \$2 trillion. Let's get this out the door. Let's get something started, and let's keep the battle going for the other things. But for the sake of our nonprofits, for the sake of our small businesses, for the sake of people who want to stay employed, the people who are small business and restaurant owners and coffee shop owners and retailers—for the sake of them, why do we not just go ahead and get this vote on and stop delaying it, trying to add one more special interest something into it?

I move that we get going and get this done. I encourage my colleagues on the other side to stop trying to renegotiate everything we have already negotiated and to stop adding one more thing. Let's make the one more thing a vote. With that, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

MR. HOEVEN. Mr. President, earlier, I was on the floor and talked about how important it is—along with my fellow colleagues—that we move this bill and get it done now. I mean, it is very important that we get it done now. We talked about a lot of different things, but one of the points I wanted to make—I work with it so much, as do some of my colleagues who are going to join me here—is making sure we are also addressing rural America: our farmers, our ranchers, agriculture, rural America. That is the food supply everyone depends on every single day. It is so critically important all the time but particularly at a time like this when we are faced with a pandemic that we keep that food supply working and moving—the whole food chain—all the way from the farmer and rancher, all the way up to the consumer.

As a result of what our farmers and ranchers do, every single American benefits from the lowest cost, highest quality food supply in the history of the world, and they can count on it. They can count on it.

As we pass this phase 3 bill, which is now, I think, about \$1.8 trillion, we cannot leave the farmers and ranchers of America out of the bill. It is that simple. Every single American depends on them every single day—and not just Americans but people around the globe. It is so important that we include agriculture in this bill. That is what we have worked to do. We have worked to make sure there is a provision in there so whether it is our cattle producers or whether it is our farmers raising crops

across this great Nation, they can continue to do what they do every day on behalf of all Americans.

I talked about that a little bit earlier, but some of my colleagues want to join in, emphasizing how critically important it is that our farmers and ranchers and rural America are part of this legislation. You see on television the cities every day and what is going on in the cities.

In New York or San Francisco or wherever it may be, we get it. There are a lot of people there, and they are close together. It is a huge challenge.

Yet the food, the sustenance—the food, fuel, and fiber—they get every day comes from the heartland. It comes from the rural areas. It doesn't just come from the grocery store. It comes from rural America, and we have to be there for them and keep them going so that they can supply people across this Nation in communities large and small.

I would like to turn to my good friend, the Senator from the State of Kansas. Clearly, it is a State known as part of the breadbasket of this Nation. I would ask that the good Senator from Kansas be allowed to make some comments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I appreciate the leadership of my colleagues and, particularly today, Senator HOEVEN, on his efforts. He chairs the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture and Rural Development.

We are joined here by the Senator from Nebraska, Senator FISCHER, and the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, my colleague from Kansas, to highlight something that is particularly going to be absent from this legislation.

Earlier this month, I asked Secretary Perdue in a letter in which I was joined by many of my colleagues—both Republicans and Democrats—to look for a way to be helpful, particularly to livestock producers. The men and women who raise cattle and who feed cattle are the backbone of the ag economy and are certainly a huge and critical component of how we earn a living in Kansas.

Both Republicans and Democrats signed the letter asking that Secretary Perdue take steps. The reason this is necessary, at least according to Kansas State University research, is that since the arrival of corona, since January, \$8 to \$9 billion in lost income has occurred for livestock producers in this country. That is a huge and significant amount of money and one that is hard to recover from.

The chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee, Senator HOEVEN, indicated about the importance of rural America. This is absolutely about feeding not only the rest of our country but the globe in its entirety.

Before I return to this conversation about agriculture, I would highlight how difficult it is in rural America to

recover from an economic challenge. Certainly, our cattlemen and our livestock producers, our farmers and ranchers, recognize that we have seen instance after instance in which farmers are going out of business. I would put on top of this that, since 2013, the farm income in Kansas is down 50 percent.

You add this crisis to the challenge, and many of my farmers and ranchers may not—probably will not—survive this crisis.

We are asking the Secretary of Agriculture to come to our aid. What we discovered is that the Commodity Credit Corporation, or the CCC, needed to be replenished. Money had been spent from the CCC. We proposed in this bill that is being debated now that the CCC be replenished—that \$20 billion be restored to the Commodity Credit Corporation.

We were told by our Democrat colleagues that they wanted to make certain the money couldn't just be spent on the livestock side. So the provision in this bill, which is a bipartisan agreement, shows there is certainly agreement on the side of all of us that we care about farmers as well as ranchers. We changed the language to make certain the Secretary of Agriculture used CCC funds not only for livestock producers but also for the cultivation side, or the crop side, of agriculture.

Incidentally, my colleagues on the Democrat side asked that their names be removed from the letter. I don't understand what happened in a manner of just a day or two, in which they decided they were not interested in agriculture producers—livestock producers, in particular. Then, within the last couple of days, we now learned that the Democrats—I am not in the room. So I can't verify this. But I am told by those who presumably know that Democrats are opposed to this provision being included in the bill at all.

We cannot forget livestock producers and agriculture as we try to deal with the economic consequences of COVID-19. It is a huge challenge. I would say to my Democrat colleagues—those who signed the letter and others who visited with me and my colleagues about trying to solve this problem—that I don't know what is going on in the room that I am not a part of, but we need to make certain that the end result is where we started, which is taking care of those who produce the food and fiber of our Nation.

While I have the floor, let me point out the challenges of rural America and why it is so important to get this done today, now.

Community hospitals. There are significant resources in this bill to try to keep the doors of our hospitals open, to keep our physicians practicing medicine, and to keep the pharmacy on Main Street. They are in this bill.

The dentist is a pretty important person in a small town in Kansas—and the optometrist. They are all a huge component in how we deliver

healthcare. These are very small businesses. Many are sole practitioners, and they employ just a handful of people.

This bill will help them. Yet it is stymied. I would say that even if you are not a healthcare provider, this bill is important to every small business in Kansas. It is important to the business, not for the business's sake but for the people who work for that business. We want that sole proprietor. We want that business that employs 5, 10, 50 people.

A lot of small manufacturers in Kansas produce agriculture equipment. They are on the cusp of being put out of business, and what is so dramatic in rural America is, if we lose a business, the chances of reviving it in the future disappears.

Almost all of our businesses in small towns across Kansas and around the Nation are hanging on already by a thread. This is the factor now that may put them out of business—is likely to put them out of business—and the chances of them coming back into business when this is over are virtually none.

Our businesses are run by small families. They are run by families, by individuals, by people who often run a business for the sole purpose of making certain their community has a business. We can linger no longer and expect that it will get better if we don't take action to help them preserve their business and the people who work for them. We need to do it now, not later.

I yield to the Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. I would like to thank the Senator from Kansas for his remarks and his strong work on behalf of, not just the livestock industry and, of course, Kansas, which, obviously, has a huge role in the cattle industry, but for all of agriculture. You are always there, and I deeply appreciate it.

Before I recognize our next colleague, I do want to make a little change in the order here. If I could, I would like to recognize our colleague from Michigan who is the ranking member on the Ag Committee. She had some thoughts she wanted to interject. I would be willing to defer to her.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I wanted to share some thoughts, and I appreciate this discussion, obviously.

As you know, Senator ROBERTS and I have basically coauthored the last two farm bills, and we all care deeply about rural America. I grew up in rural America. We have to get things done that are going to help small towns in rural America. The distinguished Senator from North Dakota and I have been talking about what we need to be doing in a number of ways.

I just wanted to indicate that, when we talk about the needs that have been addressed through the market facilitation with payments and so on, I think we have a joint interest in making sure

all of agriculture that has been hurt will be benefited by this.

I understand the concerns about livestock. About half the cash receipts of the country are what we broadly call specialty crops. I can tell you that as the No. 1 producer of tart cherries in the country—maybe the world—we have been hit so very hard by unfair practices with Turkey that we could lose the industry.

We have received no help so far from the CCC. If we are going to move forward, I have supported and will continue to support doing things we need to do for farmers, but we have to recognize all of the needs. I am certainly willing to work with you on that because that has to happen.

I would finally say this. On the one end, we have our farmers. On the other end, we have all of us who eat. We have a lot of folks in between who think the food comes from the grocery store—a lot of kids. One of the reasons I support having school gardens is for children to understand that there actually is a lot of hard work involved and food comes from our farmers.

Part of all of this, when we look at this large package, is that I know there is concern about not leaving farmers out, but we can't leave out people who are at this point struggling to eat, as well.

We have done a SNAP increase in every other crisis. In every other crisis, we had a temporary increase in SNAP funds. We desperately need to do that as well. We know that one of the best economic stimuli is to provide people with food assistance, who immediately have to spend that at the grocery store. Our grocery store owners, large and small, are challenged and are going to be challenged. This all goes right back to the farmers.

I thank you for yielding some time. I want to say that there are many of us on both sides of the aisle who certainly care deeply about agriculture. We had the largest vote, Mr. Chairman, and 87 of 100 Senators voted for the last farm bill. I think every Democrat did. We want to make sure we are supporting our farmers.

We want to make sure that families are lifted up who are struggling. I am getting calls from churches and food banks and those who are desperately concerned about families right now. We can't leave our families behind either.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. I would like to thank the Senator from Michigan. There is no question that she has been a strong advocate for agriculture. I appreciate that and her willingness to work on this. It is imperative that we include our farmers and ranchers in this package. I look forward to working with you. We do need to get to something we can approve and include in the package.

Thank you for your comments.

I turn to my colleague from Nebraska. By way of turning to her, I

want to say that the cattle industry has lost between \$7 and \$9 billion over the last 2 months. I know the cattle industry is important in the Presiding Officer's State. The cattle industry lost between \$7 and \$9 billion the last 2 months. That is why this is very urgent, and we need to act.

I turn to the Senator from Nebraska for her comments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I wish to thank my colleague from North Dakota for really being a leader and recognizing the needs that we have across rural America, the needs that we are facing in the heartland for farmers, ranchers, rural communities, and rural hospitals.

When we are looking at this pandemic and the effects it has all across this country, we need to be cognizant of the fact that we are a very diverse nation. We are a nation of condensed urban areas, and we are a nation with extreme vastness.

I happen to live in a county that is in the middle of cattle country here in the United States, where we have less than one person per square mile and there are over 6,000 square miles in my county. We understand what being rural means. We understand the differences that exist, not just within the State of Nebraska but that exist here in this country. We believe that diversity needs to be recognized when we are talking about providing relief to families, relief to small businesses, and recovery.

First, we have to get to the relief. We can't get on this bill right now. What I hear from my constituents, and I know all of you do—it doesn't matter if you are a Republican or a Democrat. I know all of you are hearing from your constituents about how ridiculous we look because we can't get on a bill for political reasons.

I hope that, as we move forward, we are able to provide relief to families. People are in need. People are hurting. People are scared. And we are here talking—which is a good thing, if we come to a positive outcome—but we don't have much time. We have small businesses across this country that are hurting.

I have heard from my dentist. I have heard from my neighbors who are very concerned about what is going on and whether they are going to be able to provide for their employees, their families and have a business to come back to.

Yet, when you talk about livestock, I think Nebraskans have a good understanding of that because livestock is the economic engine in the State of Nebraska. It is the biggest revenue provider in agriculture in the State of Nebraska. It is a part of that ag economy that drives our State's economy, which is why working on provisions that are going to help producers will help every single person in my State.

My office reached out to numbers of my friends and neighbors who are fam-

ily ranchers and family farmers, and we asked them what is going on. The Senator from North Dakota talked about the losses—the extreme losses—that we are looking at. When I talk about farmers and ranchers, I am talking about family farmers and family ranchers and how people are looking at their families, their neighbors, and their communities. The coronavirus is adding another dimension to an already battered agriculture economy. This disease has been driving down crop and livestock prices. Therefore, I am adamant that, in this bill, we have to provide relief to address that.

As for my colleague from North Dakota, who has led on this and come up with a solution that will help families, neighborhoods, communities, and my State, I thank him, for we have seen ag futures that have been dropping since February. Prices that have been offered for ranchers' cattle have been dropping. Ethanol plants are starting to idle, and they are starting to close down across the country. There is a lot of unsold grain that is sitting out in the countryside or that is in farm storage right now.

As for the cattle—and I can speak to this—we have seen large volumes of negotiated cattle being procured at lower prices. We have seen a sharply rising boxed beef market both in volume and in price. As of last Thursday, cattle volume at live auctions declined by 75 percent, which is due to the folks who are practicing social distancing. That, in turn, has caused a \$10 to \$15 drop in the market price.

Feeder cattle sales have slowed down. If you drive around counties in my State, where we see a lot of fed cattle, you will see empty pens. Feeders are getting hit twice and, arguably, the hardest. Suppliers, which include ethanol plants, are telling feeders that they have, maybe, 1 to 2 weeks max in which they can provide feed to them, and then those family farms are going to be in trouble because those ethanol plants are going to idle or they are going to shut down, which is going to cause feeders to worry about supply.

The panic buying that we are seeing in the news can be correlated back to that high volume of beef that is being sold. We can see packers that are selling large volumes of beef with outstanding consumer demand. As a cattle rancher, you want to see that consumer demand but not in these times that are so uncertain. We have had packers communicate that they are going to continue to ramp up production. We are grateful for that, and it is needed to meet that high demand.

Beef sales are increasing, as are boxed beef prices, and producers need to be able to share in the price gains of this unexpected surge in demand. In reality, the opposite has been happening. I have been working with my colleagues on measures that are in the CARES Act that will provide some relief to people in my State and across the heartland who are working to keep the world fed during this pandemic.

The provision that we have in this current version of the bill will help to provide relief to cow-calf producers and feeders through the Commodity Credit Corporation, the CCC, which we have talked about, so we can have that increase so that livestock—beef, pork, poultry—can be included, which can also assist other commodities. This provision is needed. These dollars are the vehicle that we can use to help our producers get the relief they need during these tough times.

There are so many times I hear from my neighbors that we leave agriculture out all the time; that we don't think about rural America. We do. We always do. Yet to listen to colleagues on the other side put off a vote is appalling. People are suffering, and people must be helped. We need to be here to provide relief and to have a plan for recovery. We have that. We worked in a bipartisan way to have it. Agriculture must be a part of that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Nebraska for her very powerful and heartfelt comments. I have to say she knows of what she speaks. In her coming from Nebraska and being in agriculture, nobody sees it out there more directly or understands more what our farmers and ranchers are going through than she does. I really do appreciate her comments. I think she brings home very clearly how we need to make sure that our farmers and ranchers are part of this important effort as we seek to battle this pandemic. Again, I can't thank her enough for her heartfelt comments.

I turn now to our colleague from the State of Mississippi for her comments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, as we continue to navigate this unprecedented position we find ourselves in because of this extremely contagious virus, I want to bring one issue to the attention of all of my colleagues.

Anyone who has been on social media has seen the empty shelves in the grocery stores throughout the country. The last shortage we need right now is with our American farmers. We are going to be able to feed this country but only if we keep the farmers in business. With virtually every restaurant in this country now being on shutdown, we have never found ourselves here. They are not ordering the food they normally order because they are on shutdown. We are here, in the city of Washington, DC, and have every restaurant closed except for a few for takeout, which is one market our farmers have just lost with our being in the position that we are in. We don't need to be. We have to make sure our food production continues.

As the former agriculture commissioner of the wonderful State of Mississippi, I can speak to this firsthand. When this market slows down, it doesn't move the needle a little bit; it

moves the needle a lot. The emergency supplemental appropriations portion—division B of the phase 3 coronavirus legislation—provides that critical support for American farmers and ranchers who are truly being impacted by this virus. It is an important provision that the Democrats seem to oppose but that is just a no-brainer for me.

Firstly, it reimburses the USDA's CCC that we have referred to, which is the Commodity Credit Corporation, in order to prevent any delays in program funding that is vital to U.S. agriculture.

The second thing it does is to temporarily raise the CCC's borrowing authority to ensure that the USDA has the resources it needs to assist producers during this COVID-19 emergency. This is just basic economics.

People come to the floor, and they talk about all of these programs that we need to be increasing right now. The Democrats want billions for domestic food programs, but what happens when those who are supplying our food go out of business? This is a \$1 trillion-plus package, and as the dear Senator from Nebraska stated, we cannot leave our farmers and ranchers out—the backbone of rural America.

I look at the Democrats' bill, and they are calling for the workers first. There is nobody working any harder right now to feed this country or to feed those medical workers who are being pushed beyond restraints to which they should never have to be pushed but who are willing to step up because they are within the medical community that is willing to take care of these patients. Every small business has employees, and they are going to have to be fed. We have to ensure that we continue to have the safest food supply—and cheapest, I might add—of anywhere in the entire world.

I appreciate the work of Chairman HOEVEN and others of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture for including this in this bill—this provision that is very vital. It has to remain in there.

I just want to stress the importance of making sure the farmers and ranchers can continue to do what they were born to do, including those wonderful farmers and ranchers in the State of Mississippi and throughout this country, and that is to produce our ag products in order to make sure this country will continue to sustain itself.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Mississippi, who understands agriculture, is a strong advocate for agriculture, and recognizes how critically important it is.

At this point, I turn to our chairman of the Ag Committee. He is somebody who has been around agriculture for a long, long time. He has worked on many, many farm bills, and whether it is livestock or crops or specialty crops—across the board—he understands.

I say that for this reason: The provision that we have put in here helps all of ag. It is designed for all of agriculture. Certainly, it is absolutely vital for our cattle ranchers to help them in their working with the USDA, but it is for all of these other crops, too, across this great country, and there is incredible diversity in agriculture. What we have tried to do here is to make sure we have something that enables our Department of Agriculture and this body to help all of our producers. Without this, we are not able to do that, and that is why it is so vital that it is part of this package.

With that, I turn to our committee chairman.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for yielding to me.

As has been aptly pointed out by Senator HOEVEN, who, by the way, does an outstanding job as our protector on the all-powerful Senate Appropriations Committee, we are in a tough place. We really are—rural, smalltown America—given the rural healthcare delivery system with regard to this virus.

I thank Senator FISCHER, who is in the business and always does a good job of telling the story of the beef producer and of always trying to tell me that Nebraska's beef is more tender or delicious than the beef in Kansas, but that is her right.

As Senator HYDE-SMITH has just pointed out and what we have been trying to point out—and Senator STABENOW, who just recently spoke on the floor—we on the Ag Committee like to say we are the least partisan committee in the Congress. I think that was evident by the time we passed the farm bill. It took us a year to do it—a little over that—but we got 87 votes. It was truly bipartisan. I deeply regret that we have reached a point here in the Senate where that is not the case with regard to the whole Senate.

If you talk to any agriculture commodity group, any farm organization, or just up and down Main Street throughout Kansas—as a matter of fact, I talked to the chamber of commerce, Senator MORAN, who just gave some very pertinent comments to our situation out in Kansas, about the second question in: Chairman PAT, what about our rural areas?

Well, at that time, we were having trouble with regard to the testing, and some rural hospitals were having to drive a great deal of miles to Topeka. That was the only source. That stopped. In other words, it hasn't stopped, it has gotten a heck of a lot better, with Quest and LabCorp and other folks who are now making these tests available.

But I want to get back to agriculture, and the Senator from North Dakota is exactly right—we have been hit pretty hard. Two thousand thirteen was the last time we had our prices above the cost of production, and that involves everybody involved in agriculture, along with Senator THUNE.

I am going to try to wind this down here pretty quick so we can get to you, Coop, and I thank you for your help, and I thank you for your overview of what is in this bill, what isn't in this bill, and why on Earth we can't get to it.

So I think probably the best thing to do for our beef industry is to continue to work with our Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. If there is anybody who is more knowledgeable about what we are facing, I don't know who it is. And I think possibly there could be a CCC payment that would help us out in the beef industry in particular because that is where we are really in trouble. But you could go down every commodity, and you would see the same thing. People from all of their organizations are coming forward to all of us on the Ag Committee and saying: Why can't you help?

I am going to leave that subject. I think we can work on that. I think we can get some more help from CCC, and that would be a direct payment that would be immediate and that could be of help to people who are really in trouble.

I want to say something else with regard to Senator MANCHIN, who is sitting over here by his lonesome on the other side of the aisle. I really like this guy. We are good friends. We hit it off right from the first. Both of us want the same thing. In particular, his comments this morning were about the rural healthcare delivery system in West Virginia going through the same tribulation that we are going through nationwide with regard to our rural areas.

I want to point out that there is \$75 billion in this bill for our rural hospitals to pay doctors and nurses who are dealing with the virus. Well, we all are doing that.

It lifts the 2-percent sequester that happens all the time. You have to go back to 2013, and under the Budget Control Act that was passed at that particular time—not in force but at least was—what is the word for it? Referring to President Obama, he would always be under the Budget Control Act, finding the necessity that—no matter what we got from the CMS, the Centers for Medicare Services, which is lovingly called in our rural areas “It's a Mess”—not under Seema Verma, though. I think she is doing a good job. But every time we would convince CMS to raise the Medicare reimbursement to critical access hospitals, of which we have over 80 in Kansas, there was, again, that 2-percent cut. So we waived that cut for the first time since 2013.

In addition, let me say that there is special funding called for by all of the community healthcare centers and rural health centers—of which I know there are a lot in West Virginia, as there well are in Kansas—for telemedicine. That was something back in the day that we couldn't even have thought would be feasible, but it is now. There is a 15-percent reimburse-

ment increase for these folks who are using telemedicine.

So it is not like we haven't put together something we think will be approved. We could do more. We could do more, and the Senator from West Virginia has certainly indicated a strong interest in doing that. My point is, we could do that if we would just vote to get on the bill, and we would have 30 hours. I know that Senator MANCHIN and Senator ROBERTS, working together, could accomplish darn near everything.

I see the Senator rising. I am not quite through.

Mr. MANCHIN. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROBERTS. Yes, if you have to. You are my distinguished friend.

Mr. MANCHIN. Well, truly, we are friends, and there is not a person over there I don't consider my dear friend. A lot of times, that is used in a very colloquial way, but I mean it.

The Senator from Nebraska, let me—from Kansas—let me just say this. Excuse me for pronouncing the wrong State here. You don't have a problem on this side with the 30-hour wait. That has never been. We very seldom object on anything. That is not where the problem comes from. So everyone thinking that we are going to make everybody stay here for 30 hours—that is not going to happen from the Democrats objecting. We will not. There is not a person I have spoken to who is going to stop it. What they want to do is, in good faith, get to the bill. Once we get to that bill—and in the meantime, they said: Well, let's get on the bill. Can't we at least get on it and work on it? Usually we don't move to that unless there is good faith in the beginning. Right now, there is very little good faith there from the top end of the food chain. That is the sad scenario we are in.

But I can assure you, as soon as there is an agreement, we are moving, unless somebody on your side would object. There are no objections on this side. So I would hope that you all you would not use that 30-hour obstruction because it is not here.

I will have a chance to speak about this more, but I just thank you because I know rural—your State is rural, my State is rural, and it is the same. These people are out there, and they are depending on us, and we have to get together here as Americans.

Mr. ROBERTS. I appreciate your comments. I guess it is OK to call you Joe.

Mr. MANCHIN. Please.

Mr. ROBERTS. And I appreciate your friendship.

You did mention something else about, there is no objection on your side. Well, about 2 hours ago, when we got this whirlwind or this dustup going again, when our distinguished leader pointed out that we have a good bill, and it is a bipartisan bill, and now we are talking about the footprint that the airlines—the carbon footprint, that

we have to take a look at that, and on the boards of these corporations, we want to investigate whether they are truly diverse, et cetera, et cetera, and something about the Green New Deal. That is not pertinent to this particular situation, to say the least.

Then when you said an objection, here is what I am worried about: We had the Democratic leader, whom I have known from his House days—we used to play basketball together, for goodness' sake, both of us very slow. What I was doing on the court at my age, I have no idea. My job was to set blind-side picks on Democrats, which I enjoy, one of whom was CHUCK SCHUMER.

But here we have the Democratic leader—SUSAN COLLINS, sitting right here, stood up to be recognized, and there were three objections to her even talking? That is going back to the days we really don't want to go back to.

This is not the Senate I came to 24 years ago or, for that matter, the House 16 years ago or as a staff director for 12 before that and 2 before that in the Senate. I mean, I have been around here for quite a while. And these are not the worst of times. I mean, Washington was on fire when we had the horrible assassination of MLK. Then we went through Watergate, and then we went through the Vietnam war. Actually, it was the Vietnam war before Watergate. And that tore the country apart. Here in this Senate, we were able to come together to try to reach bipartisan agreement.

I am telling you that this blanket of comity and respect is pretty threadbare right now. We are right there—for a lot of reasons. I could go back to the Kavanaugh hearings or the impeachment hearings, where one of the House Members—I was sitting right here, he was talking right here, looking right at me, and said: You are on trial, and if you do not vote for this, it is treachery. I said: What? Me? I mean, what was that all about?

At that time, by the way, we could have taken first steps with regard to this virus.

I know that the assistant or the deputy leader there on your side said: Everybody take a deep breath. We don't want to take a deep breath anywhere now. But I will tell you that I hope we can come together on this and see if we can't reach some agreement. Let's get on the bill. We have got 30 hours to do it.

The Senator from West Virginia said that if we could just come to an agreement—I suppose he is meaning beyond those two doors. We have been meeting along and along and along.

I would ask the Senator, the distinguished Senator who is sitting right down here, who is about ready to do a speech, how many workshops have we had? I thought there were three. I guess there are five. But each one of them worked with our Democratic counterparts, and they got—I mean, they produced a bipartisan agreement.

I really don't understand why we can't get to at least vote for cloture, and then we have 30 hours to—and maybe we could cut back that 30 hours. I would hope that is the case if we finally come to an agreement. But with some of the things that I have heard that you want put in this bill, A, they don't fit, and two, they are counter-productive.

Let me just say this. There is a saying out in Dodge City, KS: There is a lot of cactus in the world; you don't have to sit on every one of them. And it appears to me that is what we are doing.

I have a nice square saying that is in an 8-by-10 right next to my desk, and it is a quote from Lyndon Baines Johnson: "Sometimes you just have to hunker down like a jackass in a hailstorm and just take it." Well, I am tired of just taking it. I am tired of the partisanship. I am tired of all of this work that we have put together to address what everybody understands is a national pandemic—a world pandemic—and here we are, messing around, trying to say: Oh, no, we can't vote for cloture and address some of these things with the now five working groups who have worked together to produce a product. That is wrong. That is really wrong.

So I plead with my colleagues. I don't do this. I don't come down to the floor and make partisan speeches. You do that to introduce an amendment; half of your folks won't vote for it. The same thing the other way around. When they say "Senator Roberts," I hope they remember that I am chairman of the Ag Committee, and I work very well with Senator STABENOW, and we produced a great farm bill. So I don't like doing this. But I have to warn my colleagues, this so-called blanket of comity that we always have here in the Senate is pretty threadbare. I hope we can get past this, and I hope we can vote to get to cloture and then get to a bill as soon as we can.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. I want to thank the senior Senator from Kansas for his comments and for his long service on behalf of agriculture, and I want to thank all of my colleagues who have spoken here. These are people who are working every day on behalf of our farmers and ranchers and on ag and on the Agriculture Committee.

We fashioned something here that works for agriculture. Our message is very simple: We need to make sure our farmers and ranchers are included in this bill, and we need our colleagues across the aisle to work with us to make sure it is in the bill, and we need to get this bill passed now.

With that, I would like to turn to our assistant majority leader—also from ag country—for concluding remarks. I appreciate the patience of our colleague from West Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from North Dakota for his great leadership on this issue and all over here.

Senator ROBERTS—the longtime chairman of the Senate Ag Committee and before that, the House Ag Committee—was very instrumental in our getting a farm bill in late 2018—a farm bill which provides a safety net and provides a little bit of stability in agriculture, which, as he pointed out, has been just in the tank literally since 2013.

Our producers, farmers, and ranchers across the country and in South Dakota have been operating with negative cash flows, eating into their equity, and trying to keep their operations viable, and that was before COVID-19. Now we have COVID-19, and we saw the bottom fall out of the cattle market in this country.

I don't have to tell the Presiding Officer that agriculture is important. It is the lifeblood of our economy in South Dakota. It is our No. 1 industry. But that ripple effect is felt all across the country. It is our food supply. Senator HOEVEN talked earlier today about the importance of ensuring that we maintain a safe, quality, predictable, and affordable food supply for people in this country, particularly when people are concerned in a time of crisis. We need to maintain that food supply. So I want to thank him and all of our colleagues here from farm country for working together to provide some assistance in this particular bill, which would hopefully give some relief for those who are out there, day in and day out, grinding it out to make sure we have the food and fiber to keep this country going and, for that matter, to feed the world.

Unfortunately, again, Senate Democrats don't seem willing to do that. I was encouraged to hear just a little bit ago from my friend from West Virginia, who is an advocate for agriculture. We also had the ranking member of the Ag Committee down here earlier, saying she is willing to work with us. But, unfortunately, we don't have time to waste. We don't have time to waste. This isn't something that can be put off to another day. We have producers that, if we don't do something, we are going to leave them behind, and we need our Democratic colleagues to step up and help get this bill passed.

As Senator HOEVEN mentioned, the bill would provide \$30 billion to replenish the Commodity Credit Corporation, and it has a temporary funding increase of an additional \$20 billion in CCC funding to address the impact of the outbreak of COVID-19. This funding would allow the Department of Agriculture to quickly get assistance to farmers and ranchers throughout America who are facing market volatility and declining pricing in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Farmers and ranchers, I might add, as I already mentioned, were already dealing with a weak ag economy well before this emergency hit.

I spoke with the Secretary of Agriculture a couple of days ago and conveyed to him the incredible amount of hardship and economic pain that is being created across the farm belt these days, particularly with our cattle ranchers, and the pain they are feeling as a result of these declining prices and what it might mean to their operations.

So I would simply say, in supporting all of my colleagues in what they said today, that we don't know the full impact of this outbreak across the agricultural industry, but we do know this: Our producers are doing their part to keep the grocery shelves stocked and food on our tables, and we need to do our part in providing the resources necessary to support them, which is why it is so important for many of the reasons we talked about earlier today to get on this legislation and get it moving.

The national economy is melting down, and, of course, as I said, in the economy out in farm country, it was happening well before the national economy. But if we don't do something to stop the bleeding and do it soon, there is going to be a whole world of hurt. Let's get this bill across the finish line. We need help from our Democratic colleagues to do that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I want to thank all of my colleagues, who truly are all my friends, who are here expressing their concerns. I think we are all on the same side. I think that for every one of you and me and everybody within the House and Senate, we have this disease in our States and we have it in our neighborhoods and backyards. This COVID-19 doesn't know whether you are a Democrat, a Republican, or an Independent. People are scared right now.

We have States that are sheltering in place. My State just announced that at 12 or 1 p.m. today, they are going to shelter in place, and I have a very vulnerable population I am concerned about. I have a very vulnerable healthcare system I am very much concerned about, because if they are not able to provide the services we are going to need and that we need now, then, Good Lord, help us all. We will be in trouble then. We are going to protect them, and that is what we are fighting for.

I know they are talking about this: Why are the Democrats stalling just to get on the bill? If we just got on the bill, everything would be fine.

How can we? For people to understand how this process works, we usually have an agreement before we get on a vote to pass something. If there is not an agreement, then, there is political posturing. That is what is happening. The political posturing is going on because they know there is a difference. So where can the pressure be put?

I have been here for 10 years, and I have never seen the place work at all.

So I appreciate those of you who give me some historical values on how it used to work. I wish it did. I always thought that when there was good faith, whether I agreed or not, you could have a chance to amend the bill or change the bill or do something to it. We don't get that chance here. So if we start moving before we have an agreement, then there is going to be no conciliatory movement toward something to then make it happen.

Where are we at right now? Let me state something with regard to the \$500 billion in that bill. I don't know whether it is \$1.3 trillion or \$2 trillion, but I know it is moving up rapidly. But in \$500 billion of it that we can basically identify, this is where I have had some problems in what I understand.

First of all, there is no strong language that prohibits the stock buybacks. I know they keep saying corporate bailouts. OK, forget about the bailouts, but you tell me if this is not pretty favorably slanted to one side. There is no strong language to prohibit stock buybacks. As written, the buyback limitation can be waived by Secretary Mnuchin. Secretary Mnuchin can direct funds to whom he sees as necessary but with very, very little oversight.

There is no restraint on taking the assistance and firing employees at a later time, as employers only have to keep employees "to the extent possible," which is in the language. These are the concerns.

The bill allows for a 6-month delay on releasing the names of businesses. Tell me why we would put a 6-month delay on releasing the names of businesses that take advantage and get this economic opportunity. Why shouldn't we be transparent?

There is only a 2-year prohibition on increasing executive compensation. We have seen what happens when it runs amuck. Those are the concerns we have. Those are the concerns I have.

With that, let's take the measures we agree on. We agree we should be protecting the healthcare industry. We have agreed on \$100 billion. We were way off from that, but, finally, by not agreeing to move on to the bill, it is now up to \$75 billion. I think when we come out this afternoon, there will be \$100 billion to take care of our hospitals, our rural and other healthcare systems, so they can survive, making sure that all of our healthcare providers are protected. These are the things that we are talking about and the things we have asked for.

So they start saying: Oh, just get on the bill. Yes, just get on the bill.

And then what happens? Nothing else happens, because then it is out of our jurisdiction, if you will, because we have little chance to intervene. The rules are that, basically, the majority has the rule. They can rule, and that is exactly how it works. So, we are trying to get a bill.

There is no need for us to take a vote today because we are still working on

it. I know the Secretary of Treasury is in there working on it. They are all sitting there working on it. Why would we have a vote when we knew we didn't have an agreement? But we are getting close to one, and if we get an agreement, I will state that every Democrat will vote to suspend the rules, and we will move immediately, unless there is an objection from my friends on the Republican side.

That is what we are talking about. Please, let's quit blaming each other. People are depending in my State on our taking care of healthcare workers, taking care of people laid off and who don't have a paycheck through no fault of their own. Businesses have had to close through no fault of their own. Those are the people on the frontlines. I have people scared and sheltered in place right now, an elderly population.

So there are things we have agreed on. I heard Senator LANKFORD from Oklahoma, who was speaking on the things that I agree on 1,000 percent with him. Why can't we be on that? If we can't get anything else done, let's vote today on the things we can agree on. Let's move on the healthcare, take care of COVID-19, and take care of the healthcare industry and the workers and take care of the people who lost their jobs and businesses.

We are worried about a \$500 billion payout with very little oversight and transparency. That is truly the problem in a nutshell, and all we are asking for, basically, is, Shouldn't the people and the taxpayers of this country understand where their money is going and the people who are going to be able to use it? Add some transparency and oversight to it. That is all we ask for, and that is all I ask for.

About all those other things that have been thrown in, I am not for that, and I think you all know that. I am not for the green deal, and I think you all know that. I think there has to be an all-in energy policy approach. I think we all have to have common sense, and we have to produce affordable, dependable energy and use everything we can—renewables and using fossil fuels in the cleanest possible way. So who is throwing that stuff in? I have no idea, but I can guarantee I wouldn't vote for it. But what I will vote for is exactly what we should agree on and what I think we do agree on.

Let's come together as Americans and forget about Republicans and Democrats and get this place working again. If we had the amendment process—I was totally opposed when Senator Reid basically kind of shut things down and we weren't able to have amendments. You all were, too. We were promised that no matter who takes over leadership, by golly, the system is going to open up, and we are going to have amendments and debates on the floor. And guess what. It got worse. It didn't get better. It got worse.

If you want to know why people are throwing everything but the kitchen sink into a piece of legislation, it is be-

cause they have very little opportunity to do anything here. There is too much power in the two basic leaderships. This much power should not be in so few people. All of us should be involved.

I believe—and I have said this—that we all have that better angel inside of us. I hope you let her fly. I hope you let her fly today. She needs to get out and go a little bit. We need her. We need the better angels in all of us to start looking out and taking care of each other. There are a lot of people hurting and a lot of people with uncertainty right now, and I want to make sure that we fix it. I will stay here all day and all night to make sure it gets fixed—whatever it takes.

With that, I ask all of my good friends—and I mean that, all my good friends—let's work together for the sake of this great country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I just heard my friend and colleague from West Virginia say there is no reason to vote today. There are a lot of reasons to vote today. There is a country affected by disease. People are waking up anxious, scared, afraid of the disease and the economic consequences that are there. There are a lot of reasons to vote today.

Every Member of this Senate needs to stand up and be counted, and for the Senator from West Virginia to say: I wouldn't be for this, and I don't know where that is coming from—well, just read the papers that are coming out of the Democratic House. Just read the papers of the demands by the Democrats to muck up the bill that is designed as a rescue operation for the American people. That is where the problem is. We need to vote today, again and again and again, until we provide the relief, the rescue that the American people need.

That is why we have a dozen Republicans on this side ready to speak, standing at podiums ready to speak, and there hasn't been a single Democrat on the floor to defend their position because it is indefensible. That is where we are.

We have NANCY PELOSI flying back from California because she sent the House home a week ago—they are not here—to defeat the work that we have done in a bipartisan way, and to say: Well, all of you have done nice work. Now look at our laundry list of things we are demanding: tax credits for solar panels, wind turbines, a bailout of the Postal Service. And when you go through this list, there are portions of the Green New Deal.

I am a doctor. I have been on the phone with doctors around the country, with my colleagues at the Wyoming Medical Center. They are working double time, through the weekend, day and night—the nurses, the doctors, the healthcare providers—and they need help. They are looking to us for help.

They need tests, they need masks, they need respirators, and they need hope—hope that there will be a vaccine, hope that there will be a treatment. Those are the things that are in this bill that the Democrats voted to block last night and the Democrats voted to block again today, and that is only the healthcare component of it.

Our economy cannot be unleashed again until after we get the healthcare component behind us. But our colleagues, our friends, our neighbors, people we know in our home States woke up today not being able to go to work, not being able to know if they are going to have a paycheck, not being able to pay their bills, not being able to know if they are going to feed their families, not being able to know that they are going to get food, if it is available, if they could have the money to pay for it. Yet we are not ready to provide relief.

They need it immediately. They don't need it after the Democrats block it again and again and again. The Senator from West Virginia said: I don't know why we voted today.

That is why we voted today, and that is why we need to keep voting, because the American people need relief and they need it now.

This is our duty station, and I am prepared to stay here until we get this done—but to go through this.

I talked to a small business owner who has a restaurant and has been there for 37 years. She doesn't know how she is going to make payroll. She never closed the doors except for snowstorms in Wyoming. It is a successful restaurant. She doesn't know how she is going to pay for the food that was delivered last week. She doesn't know how she is going to pay for healthcare. This bill takes care of so much of that. It was blocked by the Democrats today.

We have a good program for small businesses. It is really good. It was worked on in a bipartisan way, but yet it is being blocked by the Democrats. They blocked even the motion to proceed to the bill.

Businesses all across the country employ people, regardless of the size. It is the people who need the jobs, the people. A job is part of somebody's identity. It is who they are. The people who work realize how important it is to who they are. They feel a sense of productivity. People I know aren't looking for a check. They just want a job. They want to work. They are ready to produce, and they can't. Why? Because a disease has struck America, and the government—not the economy—the government has said “We are going to shut down this economy,” and the government has the responsibility to provide relief—to rescue those people and to provide immediate relief. Every Democrat came to the floor and voted against doing that last night and again this morning. We need to continue to vote.

This bill is about our healthcare system. It is about our economy. It is

about money in the pockets of people who, through no fault of their own, are finding themselves in a position they have never been in before—ever—where they can't go out and knock on the door and say: Will you hire me? I am ready to go to work.

Whether it is a farmer or a rancher—anyone—they can't do that today because the government says: You may not. You stay home. You might have had a good job, a job you love, and you can't go to it today. Monday—we want everyone to work on a Monday but not in America on this Monday.

So there is a role and responsibility for us to step in and do what the role of government ought to be in this case of crisis, a crisis caused by both a disease and the economy, the government's action to shut down the economy. Yet Democrats, one after another, continue to block it.

They are not blocking it for things that have to do with actually helping the American people. It is a wish list—a liberal wish list. It is astonishing that they are delaying direct assistance so they can play to their liberal left—the extremists, the environmental extremists, the labor special interests. We are here trying to fight for the men and women in the street and our hometowns, yet they are fighting for the Green New Deal. BERNIE SANDERS may have lost to Joe Biden, but the Green New Deal of BERNIE SANDERS and ELIZABETH WARREN and that entire crew is alive and well in the Democratic cloakroom and is controlling the actions today on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

They want to put up an entire cap-and-trade system for the airline industry. That is a worthy debate to have, but not on this bill. They want to expand tax credits for wind and for solar power. That is a debate that is worthy of being held, but not on this bill today. That is not going to help one person who is having problems breathing to get a respirator that they need. That is what is holding this up.

We know NANCY PELOSI has been pushing this extreme environmental agenda from the moment she cut the deal to remain as Speaker and said to the liberals: I will do what you want if you just allow me to be Speaker again. And, now, through a letter that she has written to the Democrats, she is bragging that she is carrying the flag for the Democratic agenda. The Speaker is pushing for diversity on corporate boards, for collective bargaining, and for election reform. There are proposals here in her proposal—she said: I am going to go write the bill requiring early voting and requiring same-day voter registration. Where does that fit into a bill to rescue the American people who, right now, find themselves in the throes of a disease that may kill them and in an economy that has been shut down? That is why the Democrats aren't on this floor, because what they are doing cannot be defended.

So, I would just say and I would appeal to my colleagues: Let us do the

work of the Senate. It is time for everyone to stand up and be responsible. Let us get this done. Let us get this passed. The days for political games are now behind us.

Everyone who is watching should understand the House of Representatives is not in town. They have been gone for a week. Only NANCY PELOSI just flew back from California to throw a monkey wrench into the works, and we need to get this done.

We failed the cloture vote last night, blocked by the Democrats, and at that time, we found that one of our colleagues had tested positive for coronavirus. We failed a cloture vote today, blocked by the Democrats again, when we learned that the spouse of one of our colleagues is hospitalized, on oxygen, with this same disease that is hitting the entire country.

We can litigate the Green New Deal another day. Americans' lives and livelihoods are at stake. That is the situation we are in today for the Nation. We can litigate election reform another day. We can debate diversity on corporate boards and airline fuel standards; we can do all of that another day. We can talk about cap and trade another day.

America needs now to know how we, as a nation, will survive from the standpoint of our health and our economy. We need immediate relief. The bill on the floor accomplishes that. We need to make sure that, when Americans wake up tomorrow, they don't have that same fear and trepidation about the disease, as well as their families' well-being. We need to take that decisive action today. The time for politics is beyond us. We need to vote today, and we need to pass this today.

I know my colleagues are on the floor. I know Senator PORTMAN is here after me and Senator COTTON after him. We have a dozen who are ready to speak, but I thank you for your indulgence.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Wyoming, and I think he has made it very clear what is at stake here. We are in a crisis. Our economy is in a free fall. The people we represent and families are suffering. The healthcare system is under tremendous stress.

I spent the morning on the phone, talking to Ohioans and small business owners, people who are out of a job and worried and nervous. We all know somebody who has lost a job. We all know somebody who has tested positive for this virus. Some of us, including me, know somebody who has died from the coronavirus.

We need to pull together as Republicans and Democrats, as Americans, and address this crisis. I got to listen this afternoon to colleagues of mine on the other side of the aisle talk about the legislation that is before us, and I have to tell you, it was like they were

talking about another bill, not the one that we actually are asking Democrats to allow us to vote on.

The one we are asking them to allow us to vote on is the product of a bipartisan process. The majority leader set up five different task forces. Each task force is represented by Republicans and Democrats. I was in one of them—two Republicans and two Democrats. We sat down, and we hammered out details. We took Democratic ideas, and they are represented in the legislation.

This process we have gone through—very different, by the way, from what happened in the House with regard to the first bill. We got an \$8.3 billion healthcare bill. We also had a phase 2 bill, which is about \$200 billion, that provided free testing and health insurance and healthcare and paid leave.

Now we have this bill that is \$1.8 trillion—\$1.8 trillion. That is about as big as our entire domestic discretionary spending, which we approve here every year. Yet Democrats are saying that it is not enough money.

So the most charitable way to describe what the Democrats are asking for now—although Senator BARRASSO did a good job of laying out some of the outrageous demands that have come up that have nothing to do with coronavirus—but the most charitable way to say it is that they want more money. They want more money for States. They want more money for hospitals. They want more money for so many things.

Guess what. There is \$1.8 trillion in this bill, including billions of dollars—hundreds of billions of dollars—for those purposes. If we find out in 3 weeks, in 6 weeks, or in 2 months we need to do more, we will. But that is not an excuse for stopping the progress of this legislation now when it is so badly needed.

One of the calls I got this morning was from a small business owner. Do you know what he said to me? He said the same thing I am sure all of my colleagues are hearing, which is this: I am watching; I am waiting; I don't want to pull the trigger and let my employees go. I started this business. I started it from scratch, and now I have to see the prospect of these people, whom I know and love, losing their jobs. I am waiting. I am waiting to see what you do today.

The country is waiting. The markets are waiting. People are hurting. They are suffering, but they are waiting to see if we can get our act together and actually come up with something that helps them. And do you know what? This legislation does exactly what all of us, I thought, wanted to do.

There are three things it does. One, it helps keep people at work. We want people to stay with their employer, have a job, have their healthcare, and have their retirement. Two, it helps workers who, through no fault of their own, lose their jobs. This legislation does that. And, three, let's get this healthcare crisis under control. Let's

slow the spread of the coronavirus. All three of those things are precisely what is in this legislation.

Last night, I went through in detail and described every detail of how it addresses that and where the bipartisan ideas came from. I won't do that now because I see the majority leader on the floor, and I want him to have an opportunity to speak. But I will tell you, those three objectives are in this legislation—specifically laid out in this legislation.

On the healthcare side, which is so important, we need more masks; we need more gowns; we need more ventilators; we need more respirators; and we need to have more testing and a system to track that. That is in this legislation. There is over \$4 billion to CDC to do exactly that. We need to have some data, some metrics, some measurements to know how we are doing and to be able to get out of this crisis because, until we deal with the healthcare crisis, we will continue to have this failure of our economic system because we are letting people down right now.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. PORTMAN. I will yield.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, beyond what the Senator is accurately pointing out, they put us in the following procedural position. By refusing to jump over some of these procedural steps along the way—it would not disadvantage their negotiating one bit—they have put us in a position where one Senator 1 of 100—1—could keep us here until Friday or Saturday.

Our constituents are saying to act now—as the Senator from Ohio was pointing out—minus procedural roadblocks in a time of national emergency.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, reclaiming my time, that is added to the absolutely inaccurate descriptions I have heard from the other side as to what is in this legislation.

In other words, they are blocking us from moving forward, creating the procedural hurdles that the majority leader just talked about, but also doing so by telling the American people, for instance, there is not enough in here for small businesses. My gosh, this is an unprecedented program for small businesses, something we have never done before. We are telling businesses: If you are paying your employees to stay there, you not only get a loan, you get a grant.

They say there was not enough in here to help people who are falling between the cracks. It is an unprecedented unemployment insurance system that we are setting up here.

By the way, if you look at the unemployment insurance side, look at it this way. What we are saying is that we want to increase by eight times the cost of the national unemployment insurance system. That is how I look at it. It is an additional \$600 per week, per person. It is a broader employment sys-

tem because we are going to bring in people who are self-employed, people who run the gig economy—something that we should be doing as a matter of reform, perhaps, but in this case we have to do it. These people are hurting too. This is unprecedented to provide people who are low- and moderate-income Americans the ability to have wage replacement through unemployment insurance. That has never been done before. That is in this legislation.

This is a rescue package. It is to help people weather the storm. It is to ensure that we have the ability to say to the people who are calling us and saying "Please help us" that help is on the way.

Are we going to solve every problem in this one bill? No, although \$1.8 trillion goes a long way toward solving the problem. But we will be back here again. We will be back here to ensure that we can fine-tune this legislation. And if we need to react to other challenges, we have to do that because our constituents need it. This is a crisis.

But in the meantime, let's pass this legislation. It does help small businesses and keep people at work. It does protect those workers who lose their job through no fault of their own. It does take our healthcare system, which is under such tremendous stress, and improve it in every respect to deal with this coronavirus, to slow the spread and ensure that we can tell the American people: Not only are you going to be safer and healthier if this legislation passes, but guess what, you have a fair chance of keeping your job and being able to take care of your family.

With that, I yield to my colleague.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, let me just make clear what happened over the course of the last couple of days, because I heard many of my colleagues come down to the floor today and claim that this is a bipartisan bill that is on the floor of the U.S. Senate today, which would strike a lot of Americans as curious because the votes are not bipartisan, so how could that be? How could it be a bipartisan process, as has been claimed by my Republican colleagues, yet there is not bipartisan agreement?

Well, let's start from the beginning. Instead of deciding to write this legislation from the beginning, with Republicans and Democrats in the room, the leader decided to write the bill initially, bringing together a consensus of Republican Senators and then bringing Democrats to the table. And there was a period of time—for about 24 hours—in which Democrats were in the room, and we were making progress, and that was a great 24 hours. And then, on Saturday night, all of a sudden, Democrats were let out of the room. And on Sunday morning, lobbyists on K Street sent a draft of legislation to chiefs of staff here that Democrats had no part in writing. So you can't call it a bipartisan piece of legislation if Democrats

weren't involved in the beginning, and then they were let out of the room at the end.

We appreciate having some input in the middle, but we clearly ended up with a product that doesn't have bipartisan buy-in, and much of that is because of the process that led us here.

The decision could have been made to include both parties at the table from the very beginning because, guess what. We do have differences of opinion. We do have different ways of looking at this crisis.

And our objections, our policy objections—I mean, spare me the righteous indignation about Democrats trying to settle outside political scores in the context of this legislation. Let me tell you what I care about.

What I care about is making sure that if we are going to spend \$2 trillion, we spend it wisely. And if you spend \$2 trillion, and you don't stop the virus, then you haven't done anything meaningful in the long run because this is, first, a public health crisis that is causing an economic crisis.

So, yes, one of the things that is an open issue in negotiations right now is whether we are putting in enough money for healthcare providers, nursing homes, hospitals, States, and municipalities to give them the resources to stop this virus in its tracks. We don't believe that this bill, today, has enough resources in it for States, municipalities, hospitals, nursing homes, and healthcare providers to stop the virus.

We don't think that this Congress is serious enough about the crisis in the medical supply chain today, in which our States and our hospitals and our healthcare providers are engaged in a "Lord of the Flies" environment, where they are trying to bid against each other for scarce medical supplies. We think this bill shortchanges the people who are actually going to stop this virus in its tracks.

So, yes, we don't think it is wise to rush to spend \$2 trillion if the bill doesn't stop the public health epidemic. That is a policy disagreement we have. It is a policy disagreement we have. And had Democrats been in the room with Republicans at the beginning, middle, and end, we wouldn't be here today.

As many Republicans who want can come down to the floor and say that it is one party who is responsible for this impasse, but had Democrats not been ushered out of the negotiations on Saturday night, had Democrats been there from the beginning, we likely wouldn't be here.

Second, yes, we do have policy disagreements over how we spend the enormous amount of money that is going to end up in the hands of corporations. And for those of us who were here in 2008, for those of us who voted for that bailout bill, we have regrets and reservations about how that went down because much of that money ended up in the pockets of CEOs and shareholders.

Now, I get it. We want to get the money out fast, and you are not going to be able to account for every single dollar, but what we are talking about here, which is applying very minimal conditions for job retention to literally hundreds of billions of dollars of my taxpayer money, is not wise policy.

If we don't have assurances that the billions of dollars that we are going to hand to big companies is used to preserve jobs, then I am going to tell you that my constituents don't want to spend that money unless they know that it is going to hold on to jobs, and we have policy disagreements about that right now.

I take my Republican friends at their word that they believe that the restrictions in the bill are good enough. We don't think they are. We don't think they are. And so we think we should work together throughout the day to get this right, to make sure that every dollar is there that is necessary to stop this virus, to stop looking at it as an economic crisis first and a public health crisis second, and that we should make sure that there are real requirements on this \$2 trillion to make sure that it doesn't end up in the hands of people who don't need it; that it ends up protecting jobs—not just in the hope of protecting jobs but the actual result is protecting jobs.

These are policy disagreements we have, but they are disagreements that we are still fighting over today because of the process—because of the process.

So you are angry, and we are angry. We are angry for being shut out at the beginning, and we are angry for being shut out at the end. Our Republican colleagues knew they couldn't pass anything without 60 votes. They knew, as they were developing this legislation, that they needed to get bipartisan buy-in. And yet there was a limited opportunity for us to have input here, and now we are engaged in a series of votes that are forgone conclusions until we get on the same page.

And we can because, from what I understand—and I admit, I am not one of the negotiators in the room, but from what I understand, these are not unbridgeable differences. These are not unbridgeable differences. We can figure out a way to put tighter controls on the funding that is going to companies and corporations. Let's just make sure that if we are going to spend \$2 trillion, we spend it right and make sure we aren't shortchanging our States and our hospitals.

There are provisions in the first draft of this bill that would limit which kind of providers get Medicaid dollars and which will not. Our belief is that that language actually leaves a whole bunch of healthcare providers out in the cold.

Now, some have said that was intentional. That was because Republicans didn't want Medicaid dollars to go to abortion providers. That sounds like politics to me, but that is just something I read in the paper. I don't know that that is true.

What I do know is that, whether or not that decision was about politics—the politics of reproductive healthcare—it still is just not good policy to leave a whole bunch of healthcare providers outside when it comes to the additional Medicaid money that is absolutely necessary to make sure we have what it takes to stand up defenses against this virus. That is a policy difference.

I could sit here making accusations that Republicans are bringing outside political issues into this process, like Senator BARRASSO made accusations about Democrats, but aside from that question, it just still is not good policy to limit the number of healthcare providers who can get this additional Medicaid money when everybody is in this together, when we know that every single healthcare institution, by the end of this week, is going to be dealing with patients who have positive tests for COVID-19.

These are policy differences but policy differences that didn't have to be outstanding today had the process, run by the majority party, been different and been more inclusive.

I agree that back home my constituents do not care about who takes credit for this and who drafts it. They want a bill done. They want assurances that money is on the way.

I think we have agreement on big pieces of this. I may not love the small business provision of this bill. I put a different concept on the table that I think is better than the one my Democratic and Republican colleagues have come up with. But do you know what? On that front, I will not let the perfect be the enemy of the good.

I think we have made tremendous progress on employment compensation insurance. There are big titles of this bill that I think are in good places. We should be working out the details of those outstanding issues right now rather than spending all of our time on the floor casting broadsides against each other.

I understand my Republican colleagues are complimenting themselves on how many of them are down here on the floor blaming Democrats. You are right. There are not as many Democrats here levying the same charges against Republicans, but it would be better if we were all spending time trying to work out these final differences because we can get there. We can get there.

I think we can get there by the end of the day if Republicans are committed to making sure that we attack the virus first, that we don't shortchange the public health response, and that we make sure our taxpayers don't end up subsidizing the profits and pocketbooks of people who don't need any more help from this government.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, our country is facing a crisis. Maybe I don't

need to whisper that. Our country is facing a crisis.

I have served many times over—many times over—in crisis: floods, hurricanes, and war in a slightly different suit.

We are facing a crisis. We have three States that have had National Guardsmen activated in support of the coronavirus pandemic. We are in a crisis. And right now, right here in Congress, we have the ability—the duty—to act and to provide additional, much needed relief to the American people.

Last night, and, unfortunately, yet again today, have been very, very disappointing displays of putting partisan politics ahead of the immediate needs of the American people. Now, some would call this righteous indignation. I say, no, it is fighting for the American people.

My friends on the other side of the aisle delayed—no, let's say it the way it is. They blocked—they blocked—this package to move to cloture to further debate this bill, this bipartisan relief package.

Let me make this clear. The votes we have been taking haven't even been on the final bill. It is simply a way for us to continue negotiating and debating on a path forward on a bipartisan relief package—a package that, again—I am going to echo what my colleague from Ohio said—was written in a bipartisan way, two Republicans and two Democrats from those lead committees assigned to these task forces.

Folks, Iowans deserve better than this. All Americans deserve better than this. This is no time for political games and partisan wish lists—and, yes, there are partisan wish lists out there—of things that have nothing to do with the immediate needs of this pandemic. This is a time for action, folks, and it is a time for leadership.

Look, folks, the Senate took up a House-led phase 2 package that many of us considered not perfect. Phase 2, now, let's keep that in mind. There are many phases going on during this pandemic. Phase 2, we didn't feel that was perfect. Well, what happens when a phase 2 is not perfect? You move to a phase 3 because we need relief. We put our differences aside here in the Senate, and we supported—we supported the phase 2 package and provided the second round of immediate relief for our workers, our families, our seniors, and our businesses across the country. Why? Folks, gosh, darn it, it is the right thing to do. Why can't my Democratic colleagues do the same?

We need to be working in the most efficient and effective way possible to get immediate relief to the men, the women, and the children across this country. We need to give them what they need.

I have spoken directly with Iowans by phone all week: the small businessowners, the members of our ag community, many workers at our hospitals and in our healthcare industry, these moms and dads, the employees

and employers, the grandmas and the grandpas, nurses and doctors, small businessowners, farmers, and veterans; you name it. They are all in crisis at this very moment. I can't tell you how many of those Iowans were crying on the phone with me. They keep saying: We need it now. We need relief now.

Maybe you don't think, across the aisle, that phase 3 is perfect, but—you know what—the longer we delay this, the more Iowans I am going to hear crying on the other end of the phone. Not one of them has told me: Don't pass this bill. Not a single one of them. What they have said is it needs to be done today.

Again, I will remind you that there are States where we have mobilized National Guard soldiers. The President and those Governors don't just mobilize National Guard soldiers because it is a fun thing to do. They do it because we are a nation in crisis.

Just overnight in Iowa, we had 15 more cases, and that is a total of 105 cases of coronavirus in my home State. That is not a lot compared to other States, but—you know what—Iowa is not populated a lot like other States. In Iowa, 105 is a lot.

Just a couple hours ago, I was on a call with Iowa's State leaders who were at the State Emergency Operations Center. Let me say that again—Emergency Operations Center, an EOC. You don't just set those up for fun, folks. You set them up when your State is in crisis.

They gave us a picture of what is going on with our workers and our small businesses on the ground in Iowa. Within 3 hours, the State received over 11,000 calls for unemployment insurance, and 2,000 of them are self-employed. They will not qualify for unemployment insurance. You know what would relieve their hurt? This package, phase 3.

Meanwhile, my Democratic colleagues are holding this bill up that would actually deliver the relief that is necessary for these workers whom I just mentioned for things that have nothing to do with a crisis. Senate Democrats are stalling funding for hospitals and small businesses until they get to jam through their Green New Deal. You tell me: What does placing emissions standards on airlines have to do with getting Iowa families and workers the relief they need right now?

The Green New Deal was brought up on this very floor last year. How many of them voted for it? None. None. Big zero. Big zero. They didn't believe in it then, so why are they trying to jam it through now?

Americans from every corner of this Nation are looking to the Senate for more help. This is an extraordinary situation, folks, and it requires an extraordinary response. This is, arguably, the biggest bill ever—nearly \$2 trillion of funding. But is that enough? If we were offering up \$3 trillion, would it be enough? If it were \$4 trillion, would it be enough?

I guarantee you that our friends on the other side of the aisle would say: Oh, that is not enough. We need the Green New Deal. We need XYZ—which has nothing to do with the COVID-19 crisis.

We are better than this. Let's come together in a bipartisan way, as we have done through much of this process. We took up phase 2. We supported it. I was glad to support it because it was the right thing to do. Let's deliver for the American people. It is our duty. We do not have time to delay. We must pass this additional relief now.

Again, it is phase 3. There may be many more phases to go. And if the Democrats believe it is the right thing to do, they will get this package done today, and we will move on and have discussions for yet another phase.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, America is in crisis. Time is of the essence, and the Senate needs to work on a bipartisan basis to get the job done and get it done today, without delay.

We see our fellow Americans all across this country uniting at this time of crisis—neighbors helping neighbors, people helping throughout their communities. We are watching our healthcare workers on the frontlines of fighting this virus, true heroes who are putting themselves at risk every day in order to help patients coming in the door.

They are facing extreme shortages in personal protective equipment. We need to rush that out in much greater volumes to protect them. We still have a huge shortage of tests in this country and got caught way behind the curve, and we are having to catch up. We are trying to manufacture ventilators to help those who are sick and those who may get sick.

In doing that, Americans are coming together. We have seen stories of notices going out to dentists' offices and others who have important personal protective equipment like masks but aren't needing them right now, to try to rush those to local hospitals.

We have seen nurses and doctors and other healthcare workers on the front-line coming together, and that is exactly what this Senate and House need to do. We need to do what Americans around the country are doing, uniting to help one another and help our country.

We did that on rounds 1 and 2. We worked very quickly to put together an \$8.3 billion package for round 1. What did that include? More resources for our public health infrastructure, more resources to try to accelerate the development of a vaccine and therapeutics. That was all good work.

On round 2, what did we do? We said we want to make sure that tests for the coronavirus are free because we don't want Americans not going to get tests because they can't afford them. We had to fight for that on the Democratic

side, but it became bipartisan in the end. We worked to provide more paid sick leave because we don't think it is a good idea for workers who are living paycheck to paycheck to feel like they have got to go to work when they are sick even if it means they are going to potentially spread the virus. We want to make sure that they can pay the bills at home and stay home and not spread the virus.

The provision in round 2 regarding paid sick leave was good. There are still big gaps in it. So how did rounds 1 and 2 come to pass? I hear talk over here that this is all a House initiative. Actually, it was a bipartisan initiative. The White House sat down with Speaker PELOSI, Secretary Mnuchin with Speaker PELOSI, and they hammered out rounds 1 and 2 in a bipartisan fashion. They came to the U.S. Senate, and they were passed with big bipartisan votes.

We need that same bipartisan spirit now. I have been listening in to some of the conversation on the floor. First of all, I keep hearing there aren't Democrats on the floor. Well, we are coming.

The other thing I keep hearing is let's blame Speaker PELOSI. I mean, this is pretty amazing. This bill is in the U.S. Senate. We are having discussions right now, Democrats and Republicans. We are having discussions right now, Democratic Senators and Republican Senators and the White House—again, primarily with Secretary Mnuchin—yet I am listening to people on the floor blaming Speaker PELOSI.

Well, guess how rounds 1 and 2 actually happened? They happened because Speaker PELOSI sat down with the Trump administration and they hammered it out on a bipartisan basis and came over here. This time—this time—the majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, wanted to start the process in the Senate. So let's get it done. Don't go pointing fingers at Speaker PELOSI. She is not here.

I keep hearing about the House wanting a Green New Deal as part of this emergency package. That is a total red herring. I even looked at the list of ideas that the House put out, including Speaker PELOSI's. There is no Green New Deal on this thing.

So let's get real. So why can't we vote today, again, except for by unanimous consent? It is not because of the Democrats' vote. It is because the leader, the Republican leader, chose to bring up that vote. That was a motion to proceed to the cloture vote. It was a cloture vote—a motion to proceed to cloture on the motion to proceed. That is what it was.

So what did the leader know? He knew that we are still engaged in negotiations. They are going on right now. Hopefully, when all of us on the floor leave here, we will continue to engage. But the leader knew that the votes were not there for that motion, that cloture motion. Yet he burned the one opportunity he would have today on that vote, knowing it wouldn't succeed.

He could have waited 1 hour. He could have waited 2 hours. He could have waited 3 hours. He chose to hold that vote knowing it would fail. That is a self-inflicted wound on the U.S. Senate and on the American people at this moment.

Because of that decision, we will have the earliest opportunity to vote again on Wednesday. That was the decision Leader MCCONNELL made when he decided to hold that vote today, knowing he did not have 60 votes, knowing that the negotiations were going on right now.

So he is right. If we want to have a vote between now and Wednesday, we have to do it by unanimous consent. I hope we get to that point, but—make no mistake—the vote that was held earlier could have waited until later today. It could have waited until we got closer to an agreement.

And here is the tragedy of it. We are getting pretty close on a lot of important issues. We are still far away on some, but we are getting close on some very important issues: unemployment insurance. As we speak, people are losing their jobs. We know that. Small businesses are shutting their doors. They started days ago having to shut their doors in the case of restaurants and bars and many other establishments.

We need to attack that from two angles. One is the unemployment insurance system, and we have made great progress in these discussions on that. What do we have to do when it comes to unemployment insurance? Well, we should work to make sure that somebody who is losing their job through no fault of their own because of the coronavirus—because they are working for an establishment like a restaurant that has to shut its doors—has 100 percent wage replacement for the period of time of this emergency. We wanted 6 months. Republicans wanted 3 months. I think we have got right now, in the draft, 4 months. OK. That is a compromise.

We also wanted to make sure UI could cover people who are not part of the traditional UI system: part-time workers, the self-employed, independent contractors, gig workers. So we have worked together on a bipartisan basis to make sure that we try to get those people help through UI as well, even though they are not part of the traditional system. We are trying to streamline the process by which they can demonstrate that they have been making an income so that they can get help through UI in this emergency moment.

We are pretty close on that. We have worked together on small and even midsized businesses because they are getting hammered right now across the country. We are all hearing from them, and they have had to let off their employees, in many cases, under very painful circumstances. They don't want to let their employees go, but no customers in the door means no sales,

means no income. You still have to pay your rent, if you are a small business, or your mortgage. You have other fixed costs.

So we have come together to work to try to provide a small business plan that would provide funds to those small businesses so that they can keep people on their payroll and, if they have already had to let them go, rehire them and also meet their fixed costs.

And if they spend the money the way it is directed—meaning for necessary, fixed costs and for employees—then, at the end of the day, that loan can be forgiven because we don't want small businesses to have to go through 3 months with no money through the door and just have a huge pile of bills they can't repay at the end of the day. We have also tried to expand that to include midsized businesses.

We are making progress on important things. Those conversations are going on as we speak, but there are some areas where we need to reach final agreement. One of them is proper oversight and safeguards on the \$500 billion fund to help some of the biggest businesses in the country.

We need to make sure we don't allow this economy to go into free fall, but I hope we would all agree that we don't want a major corporation getting taxpayer dollars and going and doing another stock buyback or for big employee compensation. There is some language in there, but then there are waiver provisions.

I hope we would at least put the safeguards in this provision that we did in TARP, which was the rescue package in 2008. That was much maligned. For many good reasons, there were not adequate protections to make sure that moneys were spent in an accountable way.

Don't we want to make sure the \$500 billion is spent in an accountable way? I don't know why it is taking us so long to come to an agreement on that. I don't think our Republican colleagues would want to give any administration a blank check to spend \$500 billion however they want, without any clear safeguards or some process for accountability.

That is what we are talking about now. Maybe we could resolve that in 2 hours; maybe we could resolve it in 3. Then we could have had the vote. But the majority leader burned that vote. He burned that vote by having it when he knew the votes weren't there and when he knew conversations were still going on.

I was in my office listening to this discussion on the floor of the Senate with the majority leader all upset. He brought that on this body by holding that vote as negotiations were going on.

What else do we need to work on still? We all got a letter from the National Governors Association, bipartisan—Republicans and Democrats—saying: Hey, we are the States; we are on the frontlines of this; we need some help.

I don't know if all my colleagues on the floor know it, but just about 48 hours ago, the position of the Republican Senate leadership was: No, we are not going to deal with those big issues now. We will do it another day.

Those are issues pressing right now. We are hearing that from Republican and Democratic Governors. We are hearing it from mayors. We heard it from the National League of Cities. Don't you think it is worth spending a couple of hours so that we can hash all that out before you call a vote where you know the outcome in advance?

FMAP—these are Republican and Democratic Governors pointing out they need more Federal help on the healthcare and medical front as more and more people are coming in the doors. Don't you think we can work that out in the next couple of hours? Why hold a vote that you know is going to fail and means you can't hold the next one until Wednesday without unanimous consent? I hope my Republican colleagues will ask the majority leader that question.

We have made a lot of progress on some very important parts of this bill, but we also have a fair distance to go. But a fair distance in terms of getting to an agreement doesn't mean it has to take all day. We should be able to come to an agreement on many of these things.

The administration took an appropriate action, saying that they don't want landlords to be able to foreclosure on certain mortgages. I think we should all work together to make sure that people don't get thrown out of their homes through foreclosures—or evicted from their homes if they are renters—during this period of time if it turns out they don't have the income to pay those bills. I hope we can work that out too. I hope there will be agreement on that measure.

Instead of playing political games on the floor of the Senate and calling a vote where the outcome was predetermined because we are still negotiating on a bipartisan basis—instead of doing that, let's get this job done.

To listen to Members of the U.S. Senate who are negotiating this here try to blame the House of Representatives and Speaker PELOSI—come on, that is just political rhetoric. The House passed rounds 1 and 2; they did it on a bipartisan basis, speaking with the administration and Secretary Mnuchin. They did that. It is the Senate right now that can't get its job done.

Let's stop playing games—procedural games. Let's hammer this out, as we have been trying to do. We have made progress. We can close the distance, and then if we can get all that done, we could actually bring it up by unanimous consent anytime.

Let's do what the American people are doing: Let's unite at this time of crisis; let's unite for the good of the country. We did it on rounds 1 and 2. Let's do it to help save our economy and fight the healthcare fight against

the coronavirus. I am confident—I am confident—if we put our minds to it, we can get the job done for the American people.

Let's go back to work. Let's complete these negotiations, and maybe we can come back in a couple of hours with a proposal that gets the consent and support of this entire body.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ERNST). The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, the health and livelihoods of the American people are at risk; they are in danger. We cannot afford to keep squabbling and arguing in the U.S. Senate. Time is not on our side. Each day matters. In fact, every hour matters.

As we look at the stats coming in terms of those who have been infected with COVID-19, it is literally hour by hour. This is a logarithmic kind of scale. This is a doubling-every-day kind of scale that is going on. Hours matter; minutes matter.

Like many of my colleagues in the U.S. Senate, I have been talking to Montanans around the clock to get their feedback—hospital leaders, ag groups, Tribal leaders, small business leaders, construction workers.

We are in a public health and an economic crisis. I have not sensed fear like this from the American people anytime in my life. I remember 9/11. I remember the crisis of 2008. I remember the 1987 crash. Those pale in comparison to what we are seeing today at this very moment in our country.

This is a time that we need to come together. This is a time we must get this done for the good of our country. Neither side is going to be happy with the final product. That is part of negotiations. It is give, and it is get. The Senate bill before us provides relief for workers, for families, for small businesses, and for healthcare professionals.

I have heard some things said today on the U.S. Senate that are flatout not true. Let me set some of the facts straight—what this bill before us does do. It provides \$250 billion of unemployment insurance for those who have lost their jobs during the coronavirus outbreak—\$250 billion. What that means in Montana is \$600 a week. That is twice as big as what is currently paid per week. It is \$4 billion for masks, for gowns, for gloves, ventilators. It is the PPE discussion I just had a couple of hours ago with some of my hospital leaders and doctors and medical leaders across Montana. They are scared. There is a shortage of PPE. This bill provides \$4 billion to CDC to address that. I will tell you what: By dinking around here over this today, we lost another day when we could be moving forward to get it in the hands of our healthcare professionals.

It provides \$350 billion to allow our small businesses survive and rebound. We have had some very healthy, prosperous, good small businesses employ a lot of people in Montana. These are

good jobs. Now they are not just worried about liquidity; they are worried about insolvency. These are ranchers. These are restaurant owners.

It provides \$10.5 billion for drug development to treat and prevent the virus. Listen, we will not stop the panic we see right now in our country until we stop the pandemic. We will not stop this pandemic until we have drugs available for the American people that will provide immunity to them.

There is great hope on the horizon. There are amazing vaccines. There are amazing monoclonal antibodies through incredible ingenuity and innovation that we can provide to the American people before the second wave hits this fall.

You talk to the doctors, our best leaders at NIH, at the FDA, at the CDC; they are telling us there is probably a second wave pandemic coming in the fall of 2020 if we don't act now because, as is true with most of the world, we don't have the immune systems here to combat this virus—this coronavirus—that produces COVID-19. You either get the immunity from catching the disease or getting a vaccine or these other drugs that can provide the antibodies.

There is good news on the horizon. What did we do in this bill? We are going to allow the acceleration of manufacturing so we can get this into a widespread distribution for the American people to protect them in the next flu season when most scientists believe we will probably get hit with this again.

We just lost another day here in the U.S. Senate. Every day matters. We have vaccine trials going on, as we speak, in Seattle. They started on Monday. There are 45 individuals who received a vaccine that we believe can protect you from the coronavirus. Can you imagine the good news for the American people if we found out we have a vaccine that will protect us; we have a drug that will protect us; we have therapeutics that will help us if we contract the coronavirus. We just lost another day that could be a day we could have been closer to getting that into the hands of the American people.

We are in a race for time. We are now into the end of March. We have to get this available by September to the American people. This is literally an all-of-government, Manhattan Project kind of approach. And we just lost another day here because we couldn't get this passed in the U.S. Senate.

This also provides \$75 billion for our hospitals and our healthcare providers. Those are the men and women on the frontlines right now, saving lives. God bless them—\$75 billion for them.

If you heard the Democrats talk about this bill, you would think there is nothing here for the average, hard-working person in this country. That is absolutely false, and we can lay it all out.

There are parts of the bill that I don't like. There are parts of this bill

that I would change. But we have to be satisfied now with a good 80 for 20 because speed matters. It matters to get something done. The American people are looking here. The dysfunction in Washington they don't understand. Frankly, I don't either.

This bill before us was written by Republicans and Democrats. I will tell you why I know that—because I was part of helping negotiate to get \$10 billion for this acceleration of vaccines and drug program. I went in this week-end. We were sitting, looking at spreadsheets that said here is the Republican ask; here is the Democrat ask. There are spreadsheets. We can show them to you. We were going back and forth in a bipartisan way to try to craft a bill that we could pass in the Senate last night.

In fact, the American people are watching, both sides, in this ping pong match where one side says one thing, and the other side says the other.

Sometimes I look to people like SUSAN COLLINS and LAMAR ALEXANDER at moments like this. I think few Americans, few Senators, would claim that either LAMAR or SUSAN are hyperpartisan Senators. They have a pretty good temperature of the Senate. They have a good sense of finding ways to make things work. When you hear Senator SUSAN COLLINS outraged at what happened when Senator SCHUMER and Speaker PELOSI basically put the brakes on the discussions, we lost another day—maybe two—by demanding that this bill include an ideological wish list. SUSAN COLLINS is outraged. LAMAR ALEXANDER was shocked.

Let me tell you something: When SUSAN COLLINS is outraged and LAMAR ALEXANDER is shocked about what is going on around here, that tells you something. You can discount what I am saying here—and many Republican Senators and Democratic Senators—but those two Senators are viewed as some of the most bipartisan Senators here, and when they are outraged and shocked, that tells you what is going on in terms of one of the low levels of partisanship we have achieved in the U.S. Senate over the course of the last couple of days. This obstruction will create a devastating impact on American workers, on families, and small businesses. They are pushing for things that have nothing to do with the public health and economic crisis we are facing today. The issues they are pushing have nothing to do with overcoming this pandemic.

In a global pandemic, some have tossed aside bipartisanship to push for airline emissions standards.

I was told there is no such thing as a House bill. That is false. Here is NANCY PELOSI's House bill. She is part of the discussions. Why? Because we need something that can pass the Senate quickly now and then go to the House even more quickly.

Let me tell the American people something else. The House is not here this week. I was just speaking with a

Montanan on the phone off the floor of the Senate a few minutes ago. I was describing what is going on. He was despondent, by the way, fearing both the pandemic and also the economic panic because he is losing his business.

I said: Do you realize the U.S. House is not even in town right now?

He said: I didn't know that.

They are not. They left town last week. They are not here. At a moment when the country needs us, the House left town. They are not here as we speak. I think that has been lost in the discussion.

We can debate some of their ideological requests another time down the road. I mean, here is one from Pelosi's bill: the full offset of domestic airline emissions by 2025 for airlines that need assistance. This is section 1 of the Pelosi bill. It is right here. We can have a debate another time whether they should have part of this New Green Deal to offset emissions. Now is not the time for that debate. Now is the time to save the American people both economically and with their health.

We need to get our priorities straight. That means putting the American people first. This is not a stimulus package. That is the wrong name for it. This is not a recovery package. That is the wrong name for it. This is a rescue package. What we are debating right now is a rescue package. We must come together on both sides.

The coronavirus is not partisan. It crosses party lines. It crosses country boundaries. This is a global challenge on the shores of our country. It was time for both sides to come together and vote this bill out of the Senate yesterday, but that didn't happen. The next best time is today.

I urge my colleagues on both sides to set aside the perfect and move forward with this to restore the confidence of the American people for their health and their economic well-being.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, the United States is in the middle of a global pandemic, probably the worst public health crisis in over 100 years this country has faced. Every minute matters, every hour, every day. I have been saying this for 2 months now. Yet where are the Democrats? There is not a single one of them down here right now. Where have they been all afternoon? There was maybe one, two, or three. Probably every Republican over here has spoken because twice in less than 24 hours, the Democrats have refused to even start debate on legislation that would help the American people and our economy survive this crisis; that would provide over \$3,000 to your average working family in just the coming weeks; that would provide extra unemployment benefits to the millions of Americans who already lost their jobs and regrettably are going to lose their jobs; that would provide loans to our small- and medium-size

businesses so they won't have to lay off those Americans as they struggle to pay the bills; that would help industries that have been devastated, like the hotel industry. Thousands and thousands of hard-working Americans clean the rooms, make the beds, cook the food—all of whom desperately need help. The Democrats won't even start debate on that legislation. That is what they have done twice. They have not voted to defeat any legislation; they have voted to not even start debate.

In fact, earlier today, SUSAN COLLINS—probably the kindest, most decent, most bipartisan Senator—took the floor to speak, and CHUCK SCHUMER blocked her. He refused to allow her to speak, probably because he was scared of what she had to say and probably, just like there are no Democrats here right now, because they know they don't have anything to say. They have no case to make.

Earlier today, SHERROD BROWN was accusing us of not acting quickly enough on NANCY PELOSI's legislation that the House passed, popped smoke, and left town for more than a week. I asked a simple question: When did the House bill arrived in the Senate? He refused to answer. I asked him again that simple question. He refused to answer and rather engaged in ad hominem attacks, which is his weak and sad way of saying he has no answer, which is so often the case with the Senator from Ohio.

They come down here and they attack the Republicans for wanting corporate bailouts. They say we want to bail out corporations. Nothing could be further from the truth. Any large company that borrows money from the Treasury or takes advantage of Federal Reserve programs will have onerous terms attached to it and will have lots of strings as well. We insisted that only loans be available, not grants, not cash handouts.

Do you know what the Democrats are advocating for behind closed doors? Behind closed doors, the Democrats are demanding free cash handouts for the airlines. Right through that door right there is CHUCK SCHUMER's office. They are demanding free cash giveaways for major corporations, and they have the nerve to come down here and accuse us of bailouts? Go right through that door and ask CHUCK SCHUMER what he is demanding in secret behind closed doors.

Don't forget about all of their cities and all their States. DICK DURBIN represents one of the most bankrupt States in America and the most bankrupt city in America—Chicago. Behind those closed doors, they are demanding straight cash bailouts for States and cities that have been fiscally irresponsible for years. Yet they come down here and accuse us of bailouts. We are willing to help these cities and States. They are overwhelmed by this pandemic. Yet we simply say they have to repay the money on the back end. That is not what the Democrats are asking

for behind those closed doors over there. They want straight cash payments.

You ask yourself, why would they not even start debate? Remember, that is all we have been talking about here over these last 18 hours. Why would they risk your life and your loved ones' lives and your job and your lifetime of retirement savings? Now we know.

NANCY PELOSI is circulating a 1,400-page bill that she wants Congress to pass that she claims will help save this Nation from this terrible crisis. It is 1,400 pages. It is almost three times longer than our legislation, by the way.

To give you a sense of what might be in that bill, because, let me tell you, she is not hiding the good stuff in her bill—I don't have 1,400 pages here, but I have a few pages. Let's just go through what is a priority for NANCY PELOSI and the Democrats as they dither while Americans die.

Corporate board diversity. The Democrats want to impose quotas for race and sex on corporate boards. I know they have wanted to do that for a long time. Is that going to stop anyone from getting sick from the coronavirus?

Here is another one: bailing out the Postal Service, wiping all the debts that the post office has towards the Treasury. That is another issue we have been debating for a long time. The Postal Service needs relief. I greatly respect and praise the hard work of the men and women who are still delivering the mail, but is a survival package for the coronavirus the right time to be talking about Postal Service debt to the Treasury?

Here is another one: a \$10,000 minimum of student loan forgiveness across the board. That is another ideological wish-list item for the Democrats. What does it have to do with stopping a pandemic, especially when Donald Trump has already waived student loan payments for Americans who are affected by this terrible pandemic?

Early voting mandated in every single State. That is the same kind of early voting that almost doomed the Democrats' favorite Presidential candidate, Joe Biden, for whom NANCY PELOSI and CHUCK SCHUMER worked tirelessly to beat their colleague BERNIE SANDERS.

Combine that with same-day registration. Every single State has to register voters on the same day. Now they want to pile election rules on a bill that is designed to stop a pandemic. Let me remind you, these election rules were written by the same partisan geniuses who couldn't even count their own votes in the Iowa Democratic caucuses.

Here is a good one too: airline carbon emission offsets. Every airline that benefits from these programs—which is probably going to be all of them—has to go carbon neutral by 2025. Gee, it is going to be a pretty amazing feat of engineering to get jet engines you can

plug into the wall and fly across the continent. Democrats have a lot of faith in American ingenuity. I wonder if that will apply, by the way, to the private planes that NANCY PELOSI and her family fly in or all their buddies in Hollywood.

What about this one: Every airline has to tell you on every single flight what the greenhouse gas emissions of that flight are. You get your departure time and your seat number and your gate number and, oh, by the way, how many greenhouse gas emissions your plane will have. What will that do to help a vitally important and devastated industry get back on its feet?

Subsidizing retirement plans for community newspaper employees. Look, this has been a longstanding debate in Congress. It almost sank the retirement reform bill last year, and here it is again in a bill designed to stop a pandemic. Are you kidding me?

There is a \$15-an-hour minimum wage. Unfortunately, millions of Americans are learning that the true minimum wage is zero when you lose your job because of a global pandemic that is killing your fellow citizens and our elected leaders won't even have a debate on the bill.

Here is a beauty too: mandating that Federal public employee unions get paid for the union work they do. That means you, as a taxpayer, will pay Federal bureaucrats when they are doing work not for you, the taxpayer, but for their unions. Again, is that going to stop the pandemic?

I could go on and on and on. The Democrats' bill is 1,400 pages, after all. But the point is this: There is a good bill that was negotiated in good faith over the weekend with many Democrats—no matter what they say—that they are now blocking, that they will not even start debate on because of ideological wish-list items like those. It is disgraceful and it is dangerous to the lives of our people and to their economic well-being. It is time for the Democrats to get serious and to do their job.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, may I just add to what Mr. COTTON from Arkansas just said. It is dangerous. I think it is disgraceful. It is irresponsible, and it is not going to work. We are not going to do this.

I think people on our side are willing to go big. For Republicans, it is not so easy in 1 day to spend all we are going to spend in a single year. We are going to spend in 1 day about \$1.8 trillion—probably closer to \$2 trillion when it is over with. That is as much as we would spend in an entire year for discretionary spending. That is big. I would like to go smart. If you are going to go big, you need to be smart, right? You don't need to go crazy.

The only reason we are not voting on this bill is because the House hijacked this process. NANCY PELOSI tried to control impeachment. She tried to set

the terms of the debate for the U.S. Senate in the impeachment trial before she would send over the impeachment articles. Do you remember that whole debacle? And as we were dealing with this impeachment garbage, China was on fire. You will hear more about that later in the year.

I guess what I would say is that we need to get on with it. You are not going to be successful. We are not going to let this happen to the American people.

Rahm Emanuel, whom I actually like, said: For every crisis is an opportunity. This is not your opportunity to impose same-day voting. In the House bill, they are requiring every State in the Union, whether you like it or not, to allow same-day registration and voting. I personally would like to do that in South Carolina but not to combat the coronavirus. That is a dream they have. This is not the time to enact that dream.

If you are on a ventilator or if you are a nurse at a hospital and are waiting on medical supplies, please tell them you can't get your stuff until the Republicans agree to same-day voting. They are literally holding hostage the relief for doctors and nurses, for towns and cities, and for businesses that have had to lay off their workers for same-day voting, for corporate diversity, for \$15-an-hour minimum wage. If you get a dime of money in your business under the House bill, you will have to pay your employees \$15 an hour.

Literally, they are using this sad day in America to enact policies that wouldn't have a snowball's chance in hell of getting through the U.S. Senate. They see this as a moment for them. We see this as a moment for you. They see this as an opportunity to do things they couldn't do without the country's being on fire.

To my Democratic colleagues, I will work with you to make sure that the money going to American corporations goes to the right people. All of us don't want stock buybacks. All of us want to make sure that the money is lent and not given as a grant to the big companies in this country. All of us are willing to do more to help the States. We are willing to work on the problem. We are willing to take your legislative wish list and allow you to use this moment of crisis to turn the country upside down.

I don't know why you want to do this, but I know this: If we were doing this, the media would be eating us alive. If there were a House bill that the Republicans were writing that did away with the right to unionization, every major paper and TV station in this country would be talking about how the Republican Party is going nuts in its trying to take an ideological agenda and attach it to a national crisis that we haven't seen since World War II.

So two things are going to happen. We are not going to give in, because it is wrong. It corrupts everything about

why we are here. We worked with the House-passed bill that we didn't like because we needed to get something done that was relevant to the problem.

To the Speaker of the House, you see this as an opportunity to do things you couldn't do otherwise. The Republicans see this as an opportunity to do things that have to be done now in order to save lives.

I have never been more disgusted since Kavanaugh. You tried to destroy a good man's life just to keep the seat open. Close friends of mine in the House have publicly said that this is an opportunity to reshape the country in "our image." It is not going to happen. We didn't let you destroy Brett Kavanaugh's life to keep the seat open, and we are not going to let you turn the country upside down to shape it in your image. We will work with you, in a very generous fashion, to help people who have lost their jobs and to help doctors and nurses who have run out of supplies.

Shame on you. Shame on you for coming in at the eleventh hour and taking good faith negotiations and throwing them in an ideological ditch.

To the American people, they are going to give in because what they are wanting to do should make you as mad as hell. If you have a family member who is suffering, do you really think now is the time to impose same-day voting?

With regard to student loans, a \$10,000 loan forgiveness for every student loan in the country is a debate we will have but not on this bill. Let me tell you what it would cost to forgive \$10,000 on every student loan in this country—about \$500 billion. Here is the question: If you are going to spend \$500 billion, wouldn't you want to spend it on the virus? Wouldn't you want to spend it on hospitals that are under siege? Wouldn't you want to spend it on businesses that are shut down and have no hope of opening up anytime soon?

So we are going to hold our ground to focus on the people who need the help the most. We are going to say no to an ideological agenda. I can't believe that we are having to do this. What the hell has happened? How could we get here as a nation? We have come a long way from "we are all in it together" to this.

To my colleagues on the other side, I am more than willing to work with you on unemployment insurance and on all of the things that are in this bill. I am not going to give in to the hijacking of the legislative process by the most partisan people in the country at a time when people are dying.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know there are a number of Senators here who wish to speak. So I will not be long.

It makes me angry that we are here, talking about a bill that will not only help to defeat this virus but that will

also put money in the hands of people who are wondering: How am I going to pay the rent? How am I going to buy groceries? How am I going to buy food for my children?

We have our Democratic colleagues, who, on a party-line vote, blocked the very help for the people I am talking about. They are not worried about from where their next rent checks are coming or how they are going to pay their mortgages. They are getting paid. They are not worried about ending up like hourly workers or people who are working for tips, who are scared to death about how they are going to make ends meet.

First of all, they are worried about getting sick. Secondly, if you work for a restaurant or a hotel or are in some other service industry—heck, if you work for an airline and have been furloughed and are wondering how you are going to make ends meet—it should make all of us angry that our Democratic colleagues are using this national emergency in order to leverage their ideological wish list.

You have heard it talked about here many times, but let me just make a couple of points.

In addition to having the money go to individuals, there is enhanced unemployment compensation because people don't know how long this is going to last, and they will need to be able to sustain themselves. There is the assistance to small businesses so they can maintain their payrolls, perhaps, and keep their businesses alive for the duration of this crisis. People want to know how they are going to make ends meet today. They want to make sure there will be jobs waiting for them after we get on the other side of this coronavirus. That is what our help for the small businesses is designed to do.

The third part, which really makes me angry, is to hear them talk about this bill as containing a slush fund for Big Business. In my State and in Senator CRUZ's State, some of these businesses employ hundreds of thousands of people. I have never understood how you can claim to love the workers but hate the very person or the business that provides them with jobs. You can't separate those two. You need to have workers and those who have invested, who have created something, so they provide jobs.

This ideological division is designed for no other purpose than to mislead people into thinking this is some sort of bailout. This isn't a bailout. What we are talking about are businesses that, through no fault of their own, are going to have to lay off workers and try to make sure that, when we get on the other side of this virus—when we beat this virus—there will be jobs still available so our economy can come roaring back, as it will do, unless we mishandle our work here. So I am angry, and I am frustrated. I am not the only one.

I think about the mom and dad who are thinking: Hey, I work at a res-

taurant. The government shut the restaurant down. I don't have a paycheck. How am I going to provide for my family?

It is our Democratic colleagues, by their complete and unequivocal devotion to their ideological agenda, who are basically turning their backs on them, our fellow citizens. This is not a time for us to engage in partisan division. This is a time for us to give help where help is needed as soon as we possibly can.

As I said, I know the other Senators wish to speak. So I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, I have been here a little over a year and have dealt with several issues that tell me how this place works. I never thought we would come to the point at which we have actually choked down the real economy with the valid effort of trying to get rid of a disease, and the American public—caught in the crossfire—is already suffering. The ones who had to shutter their businesses early were hoping that, when they woke up today, they were going to see something. You can see that it is not going to happen.

Many others here have kind of gone after the other side, and I think that it is a valid argument. Yet what I am going to talk about here this evening are two things. If we do not get something done through unanimous consent and have to wait until Wednesday, we will all be held accountable, and we will have done what this place normally does—it doesn't work for the people who sent us here to do the business.

A hotel owner in Indianapolis called me earlier in the week. Last week, he had 2-percent occupancy. A number of small businesses across the country, not only in Indiana, have had employees leave, and they have had to shutter their businesses by government edict. The toll and the carnage is going to be great.

I want to stress what we might get done. I had four or five Democratic Senators tell me this, and I want to throw the gauntlet out and do it publicly. Obviously, a list like this does not make sense, and how you would even bring that up at a time like this boggles my mind. Four or five different Democratic Senators said that, if we would come together on three areas, they would have enough people to get it across the finish line even through unanimous consent.

No. 1—and I think most of the folks on my side of the aisle would agree—is shoring up what State and local governments need to effectively handle this crisis. That is Main Street. That sounds OK with me.

Next is helping the frontline industry that is responsible for fighting the disease—hospitals and providers. We are really close. We are not far away.

The one that we hear the most about would be the transparency associated

with what could be the most important part of the package. It is the Emergency Stabilization Fund, which would help all of those businesses that need liquidity in order to keep employees on their payrolls. I am going to be for full transparency. As for the airlines and their practices and what they did at the time that ate up all of their cash, I think there needs to be accountability.

Senator MANCHIN said earlier that it needs stronger language to prohibit stock buybacks—check. Most of us would be for that. Secretary Mnuchin could not have full latitude on where to direct the funds. I am a Main Street guy. I would go for that too.

We don't have enough restraints on the assistance in firing employees at a later time, as employers might do. Any of us who care about our employees would be for that as well. There are a couple other things.

So I throw the gauntlet out to the leadership, who I think trotted out a lot of this other stuff, confused the process, and now we are here to where we have to do it with unanimous consent.

I feel good that our side comes along on three key areas: helping State and local governments, helping the front-line of defense, hospitals, and holding the big companies accountable that are going to get the benefit of government assistance. And we need to keep in mind: This isn't 2008, where you are looking at bailing out and helping some of the people who caused the problem.

Even these larger businesses have been impacted by government edict to flatten the curve, and what we have to make sure is that we get this out the door so that, in the process of flattening the curve, we do not flatten the economy. We owe it to every wage earner, to every small business, and to Americans in general.

Let's take those three areas that many Democrats told me today if we just get them freed up, we will get it across the finish line. That is the gauntlet I throw at the leadership on the other side. Let's get it done. The American public expects us to.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, this is a time of extraordinary crisis for our Nation.

In this time of crisis, I call upon each of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to rise above—rise above paid partisanship, rise above the bickering that so often consumes Washington, rise above and put first the priorities of the millions of Americans who are hurt.

Look, there is a time for political disagreements. There is a time for policy disagreements. I am no stranger to robust political and policy disagreements. But we are in this midst of a global pandemic. People are dying. People are suffering.

Last night, when this Senate voted on whether to move forward with emer-

gency relief legislation for the millions of people being devastated by the economic disaster we are seeing as a result of the coronavirus epidemic, every single Democrat in this body voted to block consideration of this bill.

Now, for those of you at home who are not poring over a Senate procedural matter, what does it mean to vote to block consideration? It doesn't mean they voted against the bill. It means they voted against even starting to take it up.

The New York Times headline, moments afterward, said: Democrats block \$1.7 trillion stimulus bill. Of course, that headline had the fault of being accurate, and so within minutes, the New York Times changed it to: Democrats block \$1.7 trillion stimulus bill citing worker concerns. That was headline No. 2.

But then apparently the partisan leanings of the New York Times were too strong for that, and so they revised it a third time to say: Partisan division halts discussion of the bill.

No, it wasn't partisan division. It was one party—the Democratic Party—saying to this Chamber and the American people: Hell, no. We will not even take this up and discuss it.

At a time of crisis, at a time when people are dying, that is wrong. That is shameful.

When we awakened this morning, following the Democrats' obstruction, worldwide there were 372,563 reported cases of the coronavirus. In the hours since then, just today, there have been an additional 23,352 cases reported today. While the Democrats are blocking the bill, 23,000 new cases today.

In the United States, when we started this morning, there were 35,224 cases—this morning. Right now, as of the latest numbers, there are 41,708 cases in the United States today. That means we have had an additional 6,484 cases today while the Democrats are blockading—and by the way, where are the Democrats?

C-SPAN doesn't show this whole Chamber often, but it would be nice if they did because that entire side of the Chamber is empty. They are not showing up for work. They are not doing their job.

In Texas this morning, there had been 668 cases. As of right now, there are 722—54 more cases today while the Democrats are blocking consideration of this bill.

How about deaths? Look, as we look at this crisis, there are people right now gasping for breath. You and I, we have friends who have been diagnosed with this disease. We have read stories. We have talked to people who have struggled under it.

I heard from one individual who is hospitalized right now that breathing felt like a belt strapped across his chest; that he could barely breathe.

As of this morning, worldwide, there had been 16,381 deaths. I am sorry—that is the number now. This morning it was only 15,308. That means today,

while the Democrats have been blocking this bill, 1,073 additional people died.

In the United States, as of this morning, there were 471 deaths reported due to coronavirus. As of right now, it is 573. That means today 102 Americans died while the Democrats were blocking consideration of this bill.

In Texas as of this morning, there had been eight deaths. Now there are nine. One Texan died while half this Chamber refused to show up and do their job.

Now, this morning when we voted again, we saw the first signs of cracks. There was one Democrat, a Senator from Alabama, who had voted no yesterday, decided this morning, well, maybe we should take up the bill. One. One Democrat. Where are the rest?

There are a lot of Democrats who like to hold themselves out as moderate Democrats. Where are they?

Right now, what the Democratic leadership is doing is they are playing games. They are playing games in a way that is irresponsible.

Listen, this bill has a lot of important elements for a lot of people who are hurting. You have not only the people who are hospitalized, the people who are suffering, but you also have economic devastation, as much of this country has ground to a halt.

We have people who work in restaurants, waiters, waitresses, bellboys who haven't gone to work in over a week. We have people in hotels. I have spoken to business owner after business owner after business owner for the last week.

One hotel owner described how he currently had 6 percent occupancy rates. You can't keep a hotel running with 6 percent occupancy rates.

I talked to one hotel owner who described how he had made 5,000 layoffs in the last week. Another hotel owner had made 6,000 layoffs in the past week.

I talked to an oil and gas business owner who had laid off 5,000 workers in the past week. I talked to another oil and gas business owner who had laid off 5,000 workers in the last week.

You know, today I am thinking about people like my friends, the Republic Country Club. Now, Republic Country Club is a bit of a misnomer. It is a barbecue joint outside of Houston. It is owned by my friend Michael Berry. It is often the venue of country-western concerts. The venue is sometimes for comedy shows.

I went and took my dad to Larry the Cable Guy at Republic Country Club. I have had multiple election night parties at Republic Country Club. It is a big old honky-tonk. You have never seen so many confused national reporters as they walked in and looked around and didn't know what to make of the place.

Father's Day a year ago, I did a Father's Day party at Republic Country Club. My dad—we roasted up two whole pigs. The cook staff at the barbecue place, they made them up and had a big

party. We invited people there. It is a Cuban tradition to roast a whole pig.

Now, why am I telling you about Republic Country Club? Because yesterday, which happened to be my father's 81st birthday—yesterday Republic Country Club announced they are closing their doors.

Yesterday Michael Berry sent out a tweet telling first responders, telling police officers and firefighters and everyone on the frontline, he said: Drive by Republic Country Club today—March 23—drive by during the day, and we will give you free barbecue. We are going to cook everything we have, and we are just going to give it away and to go. You can't come in, but we are going to give you to-go boxes.

And he went on to say they are emptying out all of the liquor from the storeroom and from behind the bar, and they are giving it to the employees because the employees are all being laid off. And he said he doesn't know if he will open again.

Now, I will tell you, those employees—the bartenders, the bouncers—many of them are veterans. Many of them are big guys, covered with tats. They are salt of the earth, and right now they don't know where the rent check is coming from next week.

That is happening all across this country. That is happening not just at one barbecue place in Houston. That is happening at bars. That is happening at nail salons. It is happening at movie theaters.

You know, I love Sunday night to go with a buddy of mine and go watch a movie. Movie theaters are shut down all over this country.

Retail stores—people laid off. Nobody is going to the mall right now, and for the people who are hurting, they are scared. They don't know, No. 1, if they are going to get sick, but No. 2, they don't know how they are going to make ends meet.

This is a time of crisis, and we ought to be coming together.

Now, listen, this bill that we were moving to, I don't necessarily agree with every word of it, but there are a number of elements in this bill that are designed to provide real help to people who are hurting.

One element of this bill is to give cash—an immediate check for \$1,200—to every person in this country, every adult in this country earning under \$75,000 a year, \$2,400 for every couple earning under \$150,000 a year, plus \$500 for every child they have.

Now, you want to talk about real relief for people who are scared and they say: What do I do next? Those are checks that are coming in the mail. And what have the Democrats said? No. Halt the checks.

Right now, those checks aren't coming, and they aren't coming for one reason: because the Senate Democrats are blocking taking up that bill.

In many circumstances, that would not be the right policy outcome, to just send checks to people, but at a time of

crisis, where you need people just to be able to make it to tomorrow, putting some resources in their hands makes a big difference.

Another element of this bill that is being blocked by Senate Democrats is \$350 billion in emergency loans to small businesses—to small businesses like Republic Country Club, to small businesses like restaurants and bars, and small businesses like nail salons and barber shops and movie theaters and dress shops and hardware stores, small businesses that are right now putting up the signs saying: "Closed for coronavirus."

Those emergency loans are designed to be given with the condition that they keep their employees on payroll. A lot of these small business owners want to keep their employees on payroll, but they don't have the cash. Under the terms of this bill, those loans are forgiven if—if they keep their employees on payroll.

By the way, the Democratic talking point is, oh, this is just cash to businesses. Tell that to the owner of the barber shop who takes an emergency loan to not fire all of her employees. That loan, under the terms, is forgiven if the employees stay on the payroll. The Democrats are blocking that right now.

What about unemployment insurance? The job numbers coming out shortly I expect to be massive in terms of the job losses. I think we will see north of 2 or 3 million people who lost their jobs, and the numbers are getting worse. Every phone call I have is with more people who are losing their jobs. It is bad. It will come back, but it is bad right now. We need emergency support to get people through this dark time.

This bill has \$250 billion for additional unemployment insurance. What does that mean? That is an additional \$600 per week for an additional 13 weeks. If you are one of the waitresses right now who have just been told their jobs have gone away and you applied for unemployment insurance, if this bill passes, you get an extra \$600 immediately. But you know what—you don't right now because Senate Democrats are blocking this. If they have reasonable concerns, they are welcome to raise them.

By the way, this bill was drafted with the participation of nearly a dozen Senate Democrats who were actively part of the task force's submitting suggestions. One of the suggestions the Democrats submitted during the drafting was to plus-up those unemployment insurance numbers, and they got agreement. This was drafted in a bipartisan manner.

What happened? I will tell you. Yesterday, Sunday, most of us thought we were going to move with this, but then NANCY PELOSI decided it is time to play politics, decided to throw a grenade into this whole process. She had a list of demands—an over 1,000-page bill she drops out of nowhere—and the demands

she is pushing, I ask you, do these have anything to do with the coronavirus epidemic?

A number of people have cited the famed quote of Rahm Emanuel: "Never let a good crisis go to waste." Sadly, we are seeing the embodiment of that cynical approach right now because all of the people out of jobs, the Democrats are using to push—what are they pushing for? Changing the emissions standards for airplanes. What the hell do the emissions standards for airplanes have to do with millions of people out of work during the coronavirus epidemic? Don't treat this bill like a partisan Christmas.

Republicans have things we would like to advance, too, things I believe in deeply. You want to talk about what I would like to do? I would like to abolish the IRS. I campaigned all over the country for that. I will continue fighting for that, but I am not standing here with an amendment, saying: As part of this emergency relief, let's abolish the IRS. There is a place for that political and policy discussion.

The Democrats are pushing wind and solar tax credits. What in the hell does a windmill have to do with this crisis, other than some Democratic lobbyists getting fat and rich, and they are willing to extort a crisis to try to advance their political agenda?

There are mandates on corporate board diversity. So these are Democrats who want to social-engineer. Listen, I actually have a lot of problems with corporate boards. We have far too many corporate boards that are docile and do what management wants. That is a serious problem. There is a lot of discussion about stock buybacks. I tell you, what I am concerned about with stock buybacks is when you have compensation agreements in place that the executives get rich if they get a short-term boost in share price, and it ends up hurting the shareholders. I would love to see more vigorous boards of directors that make sure you are not creating incentives to gain a stock price. That is a reasonable question. But they want to mandate, effectively, quotas on boards of directors. What in the hell does that have to do with this crisis?

The Pelosi wish list wants to restructure the debt of the post office. Last time I checked, our postal workers go through wind and rain and snow, but they haven't been laid off.

I call upon both sides—don't play games with this. This crisis isn't going to end tomorrow. It is not going to end the next day. It is going to last for a considerable time. It is going to require adults to step up and lead.

On the pandemic, we need to follow the science. We need to listen to the doctors. We need to listen to the physicians. We need to take the steps we are taking to keep people safe.

On the economy, we need to give people who are hurting immediate relief, and we need to make sure a liquidity crisis doesn't become a solvency crisis.

It is interesting—many Democrats are saying they don't want corporate

bailouts. I agree. I am passionately opposed to corporate bailouts. One of the things I was gratefully relieved about as far as how this bill was structured is that it is structured as loans and not condition-free grants. It is structured primarily so that it is not picking favored companies that happen to have a big lobbying presence in Washington.

What does it mean to not have a liquidity crisis become a solvency crisis? Let's take, for example, the airlines. I have spoken with every major airline CEO in the past 2 weeks. The airlines are losing billions of dollars every month. They didn't cause this problem. Unlike the financial crisis in 2008, this crisis was not caused by misconduct of one industry or another. It is not the airlines' fault that the Federal Government has shut down flights to Asia and to Europe. That is not their fault. It is not the fault of the owner of a restaurant in downtown Houston that the city of Houston has shut down the restaurant. It is not the small business owner's fault.

What we don't want is, when the bills come due for all of those businesses, for them to have to sell their assets in a fire sale. We don't want the restaurant owner who has a pizzeria, who has saved to buy this fantastic pizza oven, to have to sell the pizza oven for pennies on the dollar because a liquidity crisis has become a solvency crisis. We don't want our U.S. airlines to put up a garage sale effectively to sell all their airplanes because they are going bankrupt in the midst of a crisis. We want to come out of this with a strong, robust commercial airlines sector. We want to come out of this with small businesses thriving. We want to come out of this with a thriving energy sector. We want to come out of this with jobs.

I will close this the way I started—by calling on Democrats and calling on Republicans to rise above petty partisan games. The Democratic leaders are playing these games to every one of you Democrats. Listen to the men and women in your States. Don't give in to the games. Most of the Democratic Senators say they don't even know what their side wants. But it is just their leadership that is willing to hold the American people hostage for unrelated, political, partisan objectives.

By the way, one of the reasons I think Senate Democrats are so willing to engage in this is they expect the media to be utterly complicit in their cynical gamesmanship. So we stand here this afternoon—and it is not only the Democratic side of the Chamber that is empty, but as I look up to the press, nobody is there. There is not a single reporter sitting in the Chamber. I have seen the New York Times—actually, nobody is sitting in the Chamber, so they may have closed the Chamber, in which case that may have been an unfair assault. But it is not an unfair assault to say that the New York Times is changing its headline to give political cover to Senate Democrats.

This is a time of crisis, not a time to play games. It is time to rise above. It is a time to stand for the American men and women. It is a time to stand for jobs. It is a time to help protect people's lives.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, we have heard a lot of passion here on the Senate floor this afternoon, a lot of anger, a lot of frustration. It stems from the anxiety, the anger, and the frustration that are being felt across the country right now as Americans from Alaska to Arkansas are faced with the reality of this new day—a Monday that they thought they could just never imagine. Last week, they had a healthy business and going concern, and now that business has been ordered shut down. It is a Monday where we thought the kids were going back to school after spring break, and now it has been announced that not only are they not going back after a longer spring break, but right now in my State, it has been extended until May 1, the kids go back to school. I understand today from my assistant that in Virginia, schools are not going to be going back in. They will not go back in before the end of this school year. That is pretty shocking. Here we are on a Monday that nobody could have imagined.

About 4 hours ago, we were here on this floor to conduct a vote on a motion to proceed to cloture—a motion to get on to a bill that had been worked through by good men and women on both sides for days now. It hit bumps. We do that around here. That is the nature of legislating. But this is not a time for the bumps to derail us. This is not time that we have that is unlimited to extend debate, to extend a process when we have folks back home whom we answer to who are angry, frustrated, and anxious. At the end of that vote, you heard anger from colleagues saying this was a type of political gamesmanship, brinkmanship—call it whatever you will. This is not what the American people deserve, and this is not what we should be doing as a Senate.

Our leader asked us: So where are we? Where are we right now? I think he was speaking more of where are we in the process. We can ask that question in this body and say: Are we mere hours away from being able to reach agreement here? Where we are in the views of so many who are watching this right now, where the Republicans are saying “We must move on this now. We don't have time to wait. Daylight is a-wasting” to a response that “We are still working. We are still working. We are going to try to get this done”—no, we can't just try to get this done.

I was asked about what I thought about the failure to come together on a vote last evening, and I said failure is not an option. Plain and simple, failure is not an option. So we are continuing

to work, but as we work, let's think about where the people we work for are right now.

We may say that we are stuck on some matters. We have people who are stuck in places that they never could have imagined on this Monday. We have about 19 Alaskans who are stuck in Peru, trying to get out of a country that has literally gone on lockdown. We were in a long conversation yesterday with the folks at the State Department, trying to figure out how to help them and how to help their families who are back home in Alaska, who are calling my office every day—sometimes multiple times a day—saying: What are you doing to help? What are you doing to help not only those 19 Alaskans get out of a place like Peru but the pregnant woman with several children, the minor exchange student, and the families who are over there.

Many of my colleagues were part of that call who were not only interested in those who were stuck in Peru but those who were in Guatemala and Honduras and El Salvador and other parts. We got a good group out of Morocco. We are getting calls from Alaskans who were seeking to leave the State for other services. They get on the Alcan Highway, and they are dealing with the reality of a Canadian border closure to all nonessential traffic. So we get the calls: What happens if we are going down to Seattle for medical? Is the veteran who is in the car, who is going down for medical purposes—is this an essential trip for him? They are saying: What about the spouse in the car? Maybe. We don't know. The uncertainty then comes to those individuals about being stuck.

We are not stuck here. Those are the people you think about. What are we doing to help them? This talk doesn't help them. It is not giving them any degree of certainty or any degree of relief or any belief that we can get anything done. They are looking to us to help them.

Right now, my hometown, Anchorage, is under a hunker-down order. Our mayor decided he didn't want to call it a stay-at-home order or just a stand-down order. It is a hunker-down order, and that hunker-down order went in place last night. It will go through the end of the month here.

Last week—last Monday—I got a call from the mayor, who said: I am going to be closing down all the bars, all the restaurants, and the entertainment facilities. We have to work on containment because, here in Alaska, we are kind of at the end of the supply chain, and it is a pretty scary place to be right now. So what defense do we have? We are going to be really aggressive on this shelter in place.

My son is a small businessman who provides to the restaurants in town, so when the order comes out that the restaurants are shut down, what does a small businessman, like my 26-year-old son—where does he go? How does he move forward from that Monday to this Monday? It is pretty scary.

We went from a situation on Monday of last week, when it was just one municipality that ordered the closure of restaurants and bars, to the following day—the entire State has a full-on closure. We are a State that is isolated from everybody else in the continental United States. We fly to get home. It is a fact of our lives.

We had a letter signed by multiple emergency room doctors just last week, urging the Governor to ban non-essential air travel. Think about what that means. It is pretty debilitating for a State like mine. You might say: Well, that is not going to happen.

Well, let me tell you what is happening. Right now, nonessential travel is—there is a strict advisory against nonessential travel to the State and within the State. We have villages in the interior part of the State, predominantly, that are banning outsiders from coming into the village by airplane. So that might mean visitors coming in; this time of year, it is pretty tough to have a big tourism industry in the interior part of the Alaska, but the reality is, that also means those planes that would be bringing your supplies—now, if there is a medical emergency, they would ask for relief.

This is how extreme the actions are because, in Alaska, we fully felt the impact of the Spanish influenza that took out whole villages a century ago. Our Native communities, as remote and isolated as they are, are absolutely fearful that we will see a repeat of that Spanish influenza. So if we have to shut off all economic activity, we are doing that.

This weekend, a huge effort was made to move our homeless populations out of the crowded shelters into the shut-down sports arena and hockey arena so that we can put them in an area and a place where there is, hopefully, sufficient 6-foot distancing.

The hotels around the State—I have listened to our colleagues. We are all in the same situation with the impact that is happening to our businesses as we are shutting down, and these business owners are making the difficult decisions that they are.

This morning, the faxes that I got—the Quality Inn in Kodiak, AK, is laying off 13 jobs. This is from the Baranof hotel in Juneau—most of us who have ever spent any time talking to our legislators know this is our most significant hotel in our capital city—laying off 45 hotel positions.

This is a reality that for them, as they are watching what is happening here in the Senate—or perhaps the inaction that is happening here before the cameras—they are saying: Do I have alternatives to these layoffs? Will there be the level of support for me to keep my employees retained and to keep our community moving forward?

I received a text from a friend who owns Chena Hot Springs Resort. He has owned that resort now for 22 years. It has never closed since he has had it in

operation, but he is in a position now where he has told all 90 of his employees: You can stay here; we are not open; we will feed you.

My hope is that Bernie is going to be able to keep those 90 employees and that he is going to be able to pay them through the proposal that we have built into this legislation that we have an opportunity to move, if we can only do so.

His ask to me in that text was not “Make sure that it is a \$150 billion” or “It has to be at \$1.5 trillion.” Do you know what he ended his text to me with? He said: We need to make America kind again. He wants to take care of his family, his work family, and he wants to know we are going to be responsive to that and that we will show that kindness that we would all hope would come.

I am so discouraged as I listen to the nature of the partisan words that are on this floor today because that is the last thing this body needs. That is the last thing this country needs. They need assurance from us. They need to have confidence that we get the urgency, that we hear their cries, and that we are not just sitting back here bickering because I haven’t got my No. 1 project or if we are going to make this even-stein—if there needs to be one Republican priority, then there needs to be another Democratic priority over there.

Do you know what? We all represent people of different political persuasions. My job as a Senator from the State of Alaska is to represent all those Alaskans, and I would like to think that all Alaskans think protective equipment for our medical providers is a priority for all of us. I would like to think that it is a priority for all of us, for all Alaskans, that we say it is best to keep those employees as part of your business, to keep that held in place until we can get on the other side of the immediacy of the health crisis so that we can work together to avoid a further economic crisis.

But, instead, this Monday, the American public and Alaskans who are counting on me back home—instead of being able to see this hope from their elected leaders that we have it and that we understand the urgency, what they see are the partisan words. What they see is an empty Chamber. What they hear is as much a measure of dysfunction as everything they see in their world around them right now.

One of the things our Governor has done—and, man, he has made some hard choices in the past week to 10 days. He has made some decisions that will have significant and serious economic impact on a State that is already on its knees.

One of the things he did was put together what he is calling the Alaska economic stabilization task force. This conservative Republican Governor has appointed two cochair. One cochair is a former Republican Governor, Sean Parnell, and the other one is one many

of my colleagues here in the Senate know, former Senator Mark Begich.

Politically, you couldn’t have two more different guys who are at the head of this task force, but it sent a signal to Alaskans: Look, we are all in this together. There are no Republican solutions; there are no Democrat solutions. They are just solutions, and we better figure them out. The State of Alaska is working really hard to do that.

I was just visiting with some of our Alaska labor leaders, and in addition to the issues we are talking about, they are telling me their members are out making personal protective equipment. They are getting the sewing machines out; they are getting the fabrics at JOANN Fabric, and they are just making things. They are doing what needs to be done.

We are reminded that so much good can come together if we just kind of lay down our partisan arms and say: What do we need to do for this country? What do you want for Arkansas? What do we need for Alaska? What do we need for one another? Right now, we don’t need the words that just further separate us as Americans.

I haven’t talked about the contents of the bill that we have in front of us because so many before me this afternoon have. I think we all share the desire—I hope we all share the desire to get this done readily and to get it done quickly because right now—right now—Americans are losing hope.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, growing up, my dad used to tell me on a regular basis: “You should never speak up unless you can improve upon the silence.” I tried to take that to heart in my personal life and in my professional life.

Today I feel like I can improve upon the silence. I have a deep conviction that the U.S. Senate is not living up to the expectations of the American people. The American people deserve a U.S. Senate as good as the American people. They deserve a U.S. Senate that is responsive when they need government most.

I suppose it is fashionable these days to use so many of our institutions in society to elevate ourselves. Well, folks, this institution—this institution—its credibility is at stake. The American people need this institution to function.

I was a U.S. marine after graduating from college, and I never saw a war. I never saw a national emergency or a major crisis. I am very straightforward about that, but I have to say, I was ready for a war. I was prepared for that big day when the United States of America really, really needed me, and I made sure all of my marines were prepared. We were prepared to do our duty when it mattered most.

As it relates to this pandemic, I have to say that the American people are ready. Look around. It makes you proud.

Are we not a unified people? Are we a Tribal people? There is a lot of conversation about that among political circles. Spend some time in my neighborhood. Spend some time back home in Indiana right now. Maybe it took some separation, some social distancing. Maybe it took some time away from work, some time away from social gatherings. Maybe it took cancellation, unfortunately, of March Madness, the NCAA tournament, to remind us all that we are deeply connected with one another. And we long for those connections, regardless of political philosophy and regardless of the fact that we have an election going on. That is not what is real important to regular people.

Americans are coming together. They are ready for this emergency, and this is, indeed, an emergency. Make no mistake, look across the country at all the National Guards who are being mobilized.

This is an emergency that people in my home State have been responding to favorably. The Senate needs to as well. Folks in my neighborhood are putting bags of groceries on people's doorsteps who are unable to go out and get groceries themselves. I know this from my own family. They are calling senior citizens they know who they think are probably lonely at this time. They are coming together.

Back in Evansville, one of my friends, J.P., who is a business owner and very active in the community, and I were on the phone the other day. I think, like other Members, I have had countless phone calls in the last week or so with businessowners, not-for-profit leaders, healthcare providers, and rank-and-file citizens. This active citizen, this community leader, J.P. in Evansville, says that he was on the phone with the mayor, local business leaders, local healthcare leaders, and a bunch of others from Southern Indiana, and they were all on the same page. They have figured out how to come together, how to solve local problems together. They were all ready to tackle this because they sensed what we should all sense: The sooner you can tackle these challenges, the sooner the pain will end, and the sooner we will reduce anxiety among our neighbors. They are all determined to work together. In fact, he said he had not seen such unity within the community of Evansville, IN, since 9/11. It says a lot.

Well, the Senate must be ready. This package, the CARES Act, was negotiated in a bipartisan way—two Democrats, two Republicans, in consultation with each of the varying working groups. They put together a package. It all came together, and it was introduced. It was all bipartisan until it came time to vote on a procedural vote yesterday.

You know, this virus may seem to many small because it has impacted a small percentage of our population directly, but I have to say that its impact is growing rapidly. The longer it

takes us to come together, the more damage that is going to be done. This is an emergency.

It is time, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, to take yes for an answer and not play games.

So what does this bill do? It is nothing controversial. It provides additional assistance for healthcare needs. This is a pandemic. We need more masks. We need more PPEs. Our hospitals are swamped. They can't conduct elective surgeries anymore. Their finances are out of whack. We need to help them out.

What else does it do? It helps individual Americans. Folks are resource-constrained right now. They can't go to work. So 1,200 bucks, at least for starters, per American; \$2,400 per married couple; and an additional \$500 if you have dependents—that is really going to make a difference in Hoosiers' lives.

We need to make sure that people have lives to go back to once we get through this, as well, and that is why this legislation is designed to provide much needed liquidity for these businesses. They still have debts to pay. They still have debts. They want to make payroll.

I can't tell you—I mean, I have talked to so many small businessmen in tears. I have talked to leaders of our largest corporations as well. I will tell you, I talked to a lady who didn't think things looked real good. We didn't really have a whole lot of time to respond to this. Meeting payroll, paying for rent, paying your leases, paying for mortgages, these are the essentials, folks.

And this is not 2008. That was a horrible crisis. But we are coming off of the best economy, arguably, in five decades. And because the economy was so good, people were optimistic about the future. And through no fault of their own, businessmen did sort of the rational thing. They invested in the future, the property, the plant, and the equipment that is required to grow. They were working on taking market share. All of those who believe in the free enterprise system can associate ourselves with what they were trying to accomplish.

But 2008 was a little different. The economy was lethargic. The bottom fell out of the economy. In sort of an ironic twist, when the economy is down, people are paying down their debts. They are bolstering that balance sheet. They are maintaining some liquid assets in anticipation of further tough times. We don't have that benefit right now. We can measure the prospects of our employers in days. For many of them, it is too late.

The U.S. Senate needs to treat this like an emergency because it is an emergency.

So what else does this legislation do? Well, there is a category—let me just group it together. Let me call it, incontrovertibly, emergency funding. There is \$20 billion for veterans' healthcare;

\$11 billion for vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics, and other preparedness needs, masks, gloves, and ventilators; \$75 billion for hospitals; \$4.5 billion for the Centers for Disease Control; \$12 billion for America's military as it helps respond to this pandemic, and so on. That is what the bill is all about. That is what we are fighting about.

So what happened? How did things go off track? Well, it may surprise some folks, but I have a very positive relationship with the Democratic leader. We just happen to have a lot of principled disagreements. And at the very end of a bipartisan process, when he and other Members of his caucus try and insert provisions pertaining to the Green New Deal and other far-left priorities into this package, then, that, of course, disrupts our emergency response.

So now we have Speaker PELOSI, seemingly, hijacking the process. That is right. She is over in the House of Representatives. She is not even part of this body, and her folks are all home. The House isn't in session, but Speaker PELOSI wanted to remain relevant. She decided she wanted to get some TV time, I suppose, and so her proposal involves federalizing voting. We can have an honest debate about whether it is appropriate to federalize the voting system, to mandate early voting, or same-day voter registration. That is something that should be debated in the U.S. Senate because I know it is a priority for so many of my colleagues.

Again, there are elements of the Green New Deal. We can debate whether or not there has to be a full offset of airline emissions by 2025 some other time. We can debate whether or not greenhouse gas statistics for individual flights should be widely available. Let's work on that separately after we help the American people. Let's not work on pet priorities. We can debate permanent paid leave—permanent paid leave granted by the Federal Government some other time. This is a pandemic. It is an economic emergency, a public health emergency. The American people want a response. They don't want us to focus on this right now.

I made a lot of phone calls in recent days back home. None of this is possible without the wherewithal, without the hard work of sturdy Americans, and without great American innovation, none of the resources that are required to actually sustain our government, to feed our families. People need places to work.

Here is what is happening in Indiana, a little snapshot. The RV industry, the global headquarters of the recreational vehicle industry, is in Elkhart, IN. We are seeing RV companies temporarily shutting down in Indiana, and I know we are seeing it across the country.

The hotel industry, today, the two largest hotels in Indianapolis had to shut their doors. I am not just talking about buildings shutting their doors;

this closure is going to mean the loss of employment for about 780 full-time workers. Think of all of the family members who depend on those workers. This is an emergency.

The auto industry—Hoosiers proudly manufacture the components for the auto industry. They assemble those components into finished automobiles. That industry has been brought to a halt on account of this unique crisis, and the worst, we hear, is yet to come.

Airlines, they are feeling the most immediate impact. I flew the other day from my home in the Indianapolis area. I flew out of the airport to Washington, DC. It wasn't a chartered flight. I was the only passenger. I was the only passenger on the aircraft. We know that is not a sustainable business model when you are paying for the fuel, you have a pilot, a copilot, a flight attendant, and me. This is an emergency. St. Elmo Steak House is one restaurant of the restaurants across Indiana that have had to close their doors. St. Elmo just had to do it. It is the first time it has had to do it since 1902. They were even able to keep their doors open in the midst of the 1918 flu pandemic.

This is bad. This is an emergency. The Senate needs to act.

We have Sanjay Patel. He is the president of an Indianapolis-based company, and he and my team spoke recently. He said that he had to lay off at least 100 workers just last week, with another 150 layoffs likely this week. These are families. These are individuals who take pride in their work. They want to go back to work.

Here is what Sanjay said:

We're thinking of closing a few of them here—it's just deteriorating every day. It was worse last night than the night before, and it was worse the night before than 2 days ago. It's just deteriorating and I think it's just a matter of time [until] we close down.

It is an emergency. It is not time for NANCY PELOSI's priorities. It is time for the American people's priorities.

We have a baking shop with locations in Carmel and Indianapolis that had to lay some workers off. Their owner said:

My heart goes out to my Cake Bake family, whom I was forced to lay off during this horrible virus. I am working with my banks, my insurance company, my accountant and the government to try and create some sort of relief support for my team. I am doing everything in my power to help all 170 of them. All tips received at both of our bakery counters will be divided and shared with our servers. Hoping to get through this difficult time together, coming out on the other end with the safety and health for our families.

I heard from a small optometry practice in North Vernon. They have 12 employees. The owner says:

We simply don't have the cash to fund their wages while they are off work. I am saving what cash I have to pay them, their vacation and personal day time. We are in trouble and need help.

This isn't somebody who is used to asking for help. This is the time to give them help. Let's not allow this legislation to be hijacked. Let's live up to the high standards of the American people.

At this difficult moment, let's come together like we did in 9/11, like our country has so consistently when the chips are really down.

Let's all take part in this effort. I encourage all of my constituents and anyone else around the country to encourage your Senators—Republicans and Democrats alike. Stand up. Speak out. Send emails. Tell your neighbors.

It is time for this body to move. It is time for us to deal with this crisis once and for all. We will make America great again from the bottom up. It doesn't have to take that long. We can bounce back, but the longer we wait, the harder it will be. Let's do our jobs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, we are getting a lot of redundancy around here, but it is worth it. I have been sitting here for several hours now listening to my colleagues. I don't recall, in the 25 years I have been here, seeing this happening, over and over. And everything that is said is so significant.

The Senator from Alaska talked about the fact that we are all in this together. We are, and things were going well for a while. I am actually going to, I think, end with a little bit of optimism right now. I may be the only one doing that, because I think something is going to happen tonight. I think it has to happen tonight. We don't have the luxury of waiting.

Now, I have never seen a crisis like this. We are not used to dealing with crises. Gosh, we have been through wars. We have been through things that we have considered to be crises. This is a different dimension. We are talking about people who are dying.

As for the coronavirus, we all know where it came from: Wuhan in China. It has caused global panic. By the way, they call it a pandemic. There is a reason for that, because this isn't just something happening in the United States of America. This is happening all over the world—everywhere. No one is immune. This is something that we don't have a cure for right now.

The Senator from Indiana kept using the word "emergency." This is an emergency. It is an emergency unlike any that we have seen so far. It is something that is highly contagious, something that we can't do anything about. No one is immune.

As of Sunday, according to the World Health Organization, there were 292,000 cases globally and almost 13,000 deaths. Let me put that in a different perspective because I have had the honor, in the last several days—and I am talking about including the weekend—of talking to people in Oklahoma.

I think, this morning, we talked to every single radio, television, and newspaper in the State. I always start my speeches, to make sure everyone understands, with why this is not anything we have done before, why it is so significant. I explain to people: Today is the 23rd. Let's take the 22nd and the 21st. If you go back to the 21st—or let's

say March 20, which was last Friday—we had, at that time, 210,000 cases that were known. They have been infected. Two days later, it was 322,000.

Now look at the ones who have died. On March 20, it was 8,800 people died. But 2 days after that, it was 13,714. Now, that is globally.

Look at here in the United States of America. On March 20, there were 10,500 people who contracted it, and then, just 2 days later, it was 31,000. It tripled in 2 days. That is what we are facing right now. On the deaths, they tripled—the same thing: 150 deaths on March 20, and 390 deaths on the 22nd, 2 days later.

Now, that puts it in a different category. We have never had anything like that to talk about. The reason I do that, when I am talking to people in Oklahoma, is that, like a lot of people, I have been in this position before, when it looks like we are overreacting and we look like we are creating a crisis—something that hasn't happened before. But, in this case, this is a crisis. So it is important. There are a lot of people around who are thinking: Well, you know, this is kind of manufactured. It is not that big of a deal.

In this case, it is. So, at the same time, we have thousands of Americans who are losing their jobs. We have been listening to this on the floor for a long period of time, and sometimes it is important to be redundant, to talk about these things, about people who are being forced to shut down without any sense when they might reopen.

You are spared probably 15 minutes or so of the examples that I had in my State of Oklahoma—bakeries and others. The Senator from Indiana did a good job, and I think it would be unnecessary to go over all of that. We all have those stories. There is not a Member—Democrat or Republican—in this body who has not had these experiences and who could talk about the experiences.

So we started working. This is going to sound pretty phony when I say this, but I was so proud, and I talked about how proud I was of the Democrats because, until just yesterday, we were all working together. We were having our meetings. I was with MITCH MCCONNELL, and he was showing the progress we were having. The Democrats were cooperating. We really thought really good things were going to happen. We really believed that.

So we have been working around the clock in bipartisan negotiations, and we believed that this weekend substantial progress was being made on a comprehensive phase 3.

Now, let's keep in mind that this is phase 3 that we are talking about now. This is the one that I anticipate tonight we will vote successfully on. We have to do that. If we don't do it, people are going to die. This is not like it is going to cost so much money or some people are going to be inconvenienced. People are dying.

So we had these bipartisan negotiations, and I thought we were doing

great work. While the Senate has been working here on solutions to this crisis, the Democrat House has been on recess. I am not really concerned. If they feel they can do that, that is fine.

But that didn't stop the Speaker of the House, and this is where the problem came in. See, everything was great until last night, up until the vote time. We were going to vote at 6 last night, and we thought we were going to be successful in that vote at 6 last night.

What we didn't know is that the Speaker came back, even though they are on recess, and she threw a wrench into everything that we are doing, all the bipartisan talks. She came to town and decided to make this a partisan exercise. House Democrats are now demanding that the far-left wish of radical policies be included in what is otherwise a bipartisan agreement.

I think their feeling was this: We are going to spend all this money. We have to get everything in there. If it has nothing to do with the crisis, if it has nothing to do with the virus, then, this is the time to do it. So the idea was that they wanted to spend more.

I think the Senator from Indiana did a good job of talking about some of the provisions that we are talking about, but I want to ask: Is there anybody out there right now who is a conservative? Is there anyone out there who has really kept track of what kind of spending we are talking about here?

We have never seen anything like it. Remember phase 1. That was the \$8.3 billion emergency supplemental. That was for State and local response and testing kits, and that is fine. People understood that. That was \$8.3 billion in phase 1.

Phase 2 came along. By the way, I have to admit that this was the one phase I voted against for this reason: Oklahoma is a little different than a lot of other States. We have a larger number of small businesses in Oklahoma than most other States have, and they are the ones we have been talking to. We have been talking to them because they are going to be recognizing that, after all the efforts they have made in their careers and what they have done, they are going to go out of business.

So one of the things they said that had to be corrected was found in phase 2. In phase 2, it says there that, when they mandate small business do things like paid leave and other expenses, it is fine for them to go ahead and do that if the Federal Government is going to refund the expenses for that. And they were going to do it, but not for several weeks. So our position was—those of us who had a lot of small businesses—that we want to make sure that, when phase 3 comes, we have a provision in there that will change that, in the event that you end up having to pay for mandated things—paid leave and other things for your employees. That is great. It is great that you are doing it because there is no other way in this crisis we are in the middle of that they can do

it. But they are going to change it. So, in this thing that we are going to be voting on, hopefully, tonight—and I think we are—it is going to change it so that they will be reimbursed when that time comes.

Now, those who are conservatives out there, I want you to keep track of what we are talking about here. Get a pencil and paper out. Write these things down. I want you to know what we are talking about.

The total amount of this phase 3 is going to be somewhere around \$1.6 trillion. That is a “t” we are talking about—not billion. This is a trillion.

If you look at the things that are in there, like the major problems and the corrections that were made in phase 2, that is a part of this that is going on.

For small businesses it is \$350 billion. Write it down and add it up as we go along here—\$350 billion. That is to take care of some of the problems that came out that weren't addressed in phase 2. We are talking about loans up to \$10 million to individuals through 2020. All employers with up to 500 employees are eligible for this. The repayment of that—these are loans, but that is going to be delayed for 1 year. They don't have to pay back a portion of the loan, but most of that would have to be paid back. That is \$350 billion.

Healthcare provisions. We have \$75 billion that goes to hospitals and healthcare providers throughout the country. These are mostly for the larger hospitals. You have a smaller amount—\$275 million—that would expand services to rural hospitals.

In the State of Oklahoma, we have a lot of rural hospitals. A lot of our rural hospitals have gone under.

I can remember one time, back when Bill Clinton was the President, we had this great thing, and all my conservative friends were voting to support this. This was a budget balance amendment that would bring down the deficit, but it was doing it on the backs of rural hospitals. At that time, I was ranked as the most conservative Member in the U.S. Senate, and I voted against it. All of my conservative friends said: Wait a minute; how can you do that? We can do that because in the State of Oklahoma, we have to take care of our rural hospitals.

That is in there—\$275 million. Add it up. Write it down.

There is \$3.5 billion for vaccine development. That has to be done. We have to find a cure for this. Every day, you hear new ideas coming along. Is it the same thing that can be done for malaria? Is it the same thing that can be done for other problems? Again, the cost is there. We are going to have to do that. That is \$3.5 billion.

There is a \$2 billion item for a national security stockpile. How many people know that there is such a thing as a national security stockpile? They don't know. I am a Member of the U.S. Senate, and I can't even tell you where it is. The reason I can't is because it is classified. People are not supposed to

know where it is. Nonetheless, there are things like masks, gowns, ventilators, and that type of thing. It is a smaller amount—only \$2 billion—but write it down, and put it in there.

There is \$500 billion for support of individuals. This is the one I hear mostly about from conservatives. Conservatives, listen carefully. There is going to be a cash payment to individuals of \$1,200—\$1,200. Here is a check for \$1,200. That would be for people in categories where they—they are not wealthy people. If they are married, it wouldn't be \$1,200; it would be \$2,400. That is per individual. If they have kids, for each kid, it would be \$500 additional.

That is out there, and that is a part of this thing that a lot of people and particularly conservatives look at and don't like. This is different. This is different from anything else we have done before. We are trying to survive right now. People are dying every day. I hope I don't have to go out and repeat what we started out with on how many people are dying every day.

Unemployment benefits. Think of the cost of that—39 weeks of unemployment benefits for the coronavirus job losses. In addition to that, they have benefits that increase by \$600 a week. Usually, it is the States that pay for it. The States can't do it.

My State of Oklahoma—we have a great Governor in Oklahoma, Kevin Stitt. Yet he is not able to do that. We never anticipated the expenses we are going to have. We never anticipated what has happened to our income—the revenues that come into the State that we have always expected since statehood in Oklahoma, which was not that long ago compared to other States. That is something we know the cost of, and we have never had to have the loss of revenue in the State of Oklahoma like we are having today.

Unemployment benefits. There is 39 weeks of unemployment benefits for the job losses on coronavirus. We are talking about, on unemployment benefits, \$600 a week. As I said, normally that is paid for by the State but not in this case.

Emergency loans for distressed industries in States: \$500 billion in total. People are talking about it. The speaker before me talked about coming here in an empty airplane. I came in on Monday, a week ago today, and there were only 14 people on a 737 airplane. Obviously, that is something that can't continue. We also have to take care of the cargo people. It is \$50 billion for passenger air and \$8 billion for cargo air.

I say this because I want you to keep adding this stuff up.

Then you have another figure: \$17 billion for national security firms.

That leaves about \$425 billion for the Treasury if they determine something has been overlooked, so they can take care of that.

I started out with saying that I want the conservatives in America to be listening because as of now, GovTrack

had me down as the most conservative Member of the U.S. Senate. So I want people who have been adding this up to realize that even I, with that background, am saying we are dealing with something we have never dealt with before.

As we look and we see the tax credits for solar and some of these things that were a part of the liberal agenda, this is something that is going on, and that is what we are dealing with right now.

Everything was great until last night, and we were making great headway. I was complimenting the Democrats on the cooperation we had, and we can get that back again. But this temporary thing came in where all of a sudden you have the Speaker of the House looking at her liberal agenda and saying: Hey, there is a lot of money out there. I have to get mine. Let's get in line and do that.

They want money for emissions standards. What has that got to do with the virus? It means nothing. It has nothing to do with it. It is not what Americans want, and these things have nothing to do with the crisis.

I have to say that PELOSI is going to have to wake up and take this seriously and stop playing political games. It has to happen now. It has to happen tonight. Stop and calculate, every day we take, how many people are dying during that time. We have never been faced with this before. It is time for the political games to quit. They want us to work together on this package. I think this is what we are going to be doing.

For the last few weeks, I have been complimenting the Senate Democrats for the efforts they are making, and all of that came to a halt last night. I have been saying that this is a crisis where Democrats and Republicans need to put politics aside. That is what is going to have to happen. It has to happen—not, if we are lucky, next week; it has to happen tonight. It was until 6 o'clock last night that Senate Democrats were fully cooperating. That came across pretty quick.

Let me make one comment. I know there are a lot of "hate Trump" people out there. I see them all the time. I love the guy. He has done a great job. When you stop and think about what he has done in this country—and a lot of people are trying to build a case to some of the "hate Trump" people that he didn't move on this quickly enough. Well, he did. This thing happened in January. The first thing he did was stop the traffic coming into this country from China. He didn't sit around and wait; he did it immediately. And then he declared an emergency. All of these things he did immediately. He had the daily press conferences. I hope people are watching those. He is sitting back and having the top medical people in America talking about the problems we are having.

This is kind of good news because we started this thing with the best economy we have had in my lifetime. Even

those individuals who are the "hate Trump" people have to realize that the economy is the best economy we have had. There are a couple of ways that he did it. First of all, there was the big tax cut. There are two things that caused this. One was the tax cut.

I have a reason for bringing this up right now, at the conclusion of my remarks; that is, when we had the tax cut, it wasn't a Republican idea, it was a Democratic idea. That was John Kennedy. He was President in 1964. What did he say? He said: You know, with the Great Society coming on, we have to get more revenue. We have to get more revenue, and the best way to increase your revenue is to decrease the marginal tax rates. He did it, and it worked. Unfortunately, he died and could not reap the benefits of that success. The revenues came in rapidly at that time.

Other efforts for reducing taxes have been successful too. President Trump coupled that with doing away with overregulation. I can remember mine. I was very happy that mine was the first bill he signed. It was a regulation. It was put together back during the previous administration. It said: If you are a domestic oil or gas company and you are competing for business with China or somebody else, you have to give them your whole playbook on how you calculated your—well, that was giving a distinct advantage. It was part of the war on fossil fuels that the President had at that time. When this new President was elected, we went ahead and passed a bill to repeal that regulation. So the overregulation—that is what made it very successful.

He has appointed, right now, 190 new conservative judges. People who are not conservatives, people who don't really feel that strongly about the Constitution, are not excited about that—190 new conservative judges. We haven't had that many judges in the first term of a President in the history of this country—including, of course, two Justices to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Pro-Israel. A lot of people don't like Israel. They are sympathetic with others. But how many Presidents have said: We want to move the capital of Israel to Jerusalem. He is the one who has done it.

We have rebuilt the military. How many people know this? I chair the committee. It is called the Senate Armed Services Committee. I had the responsibility of trying to get it rebuilt because we lost during the Obama years. The last 5 years of Obama, he actually reduced the amount of money for our defense by 25 percent. It had never happened before.

I say this because we now have a great advantage. We are going to correct this. I think it is going to happen tonight. I am really optimistic it will because if it doesn't, people are going to die. People are dying right now. When that happens, when we get this rebuilt and get beyond the crisis that

we have all talked about today that we are in the middle of right now, we are going to go back, and we will be thanking God we started this whole thing with one of the best economies we have ever had.

When we are looking at what is happening every day—and I am not going to go back and repeat it, but we know it is happening—the number of people who are dying on a daily basis, every day we put this off, people are dying. For that reason, I really think that right now, somewhere in the Capitol, in a room, we have Democrats and Republicans who are going to come to some sort of an agreement. I don't care when it is—it can be midnight; it can be anytime—it has to happen. We are out of time. This is a crisis. We don't have the luxury of time. It is going to have to be done. It is going to have to be done tonight.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, it is so interesting to sit here and listen to our colleagues because the thing that touches me the most is that we are all talking to, talking with, and listening to our constituents, and certainly Tennesseans are talking with us and expressing some of their fears.

Earlier today, I had a call from a small business owner who is in Tennessee, and she said: I am going to throw one of your lines back at you.

I said: Well, what is that?

She said: I have heard you say before that sometimes so-and-so was on your last nerve.

I said: Yes, you have heard me say that.

She said: Well, you people in Washington now are on my last nerve.

I said: Really?

She said: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. You know, I don't want my children to know that I am afraid. I don't want them to hear me be fearful. But inside, I am screaming in silence because I need you all to get something done.

See, this is a typical small business owner. She and her husband started a business. They struggled until the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act came along. What happened? They saw growth. This Main Street business became their embodiment of the American dream. They were excited. Things were good. Today she is saying: I don't know if we should hang on to our employees. I don't know if we should close the doors. I don't know what we should do, and you all can't make a decision.

I told her I fully understood where she was because it makes me anxious too. It disappoints me tremendously. I think there is a lot to be said about negotiating in good faith and exercising good faith and honesty with the people whom you want to work with. And certainly, the majority leader and the task forces felt that they were working in good faith. What they had structured sounded really good to a lot of Tennesseans.

You had a bill that basically was healthcare assistance, food assistance, and financial assistance—different pockets. But most importantly, they were components that would meet the needs. We discussed some of these. For small businesses and independent contractors and sole proprietors and the self-employed—and I do thank MARCO RUBIO and SUSAN COLLINS for working with me on making certain that we included those entities. You are talking about \$250 billion that would be there through unemployment insurance. These sole proprietors and small businesses would be able to go into that and stand themselves up by drawing that money down, keeping people employed, and then having it serve as a grant.

Also for our rural communities, for telehealth and for our hospitals, there is \$75 billion. It was a good thing. Let's take healthcare to the person instead of the person having to move to the healthcare. Great. That is the common sense in this bill that our friends across the aisle walked away from. They walked away from it. They said no to the unemployment benefits, no to small business, no to telehealth.

There were also additional funds that would be there for employers to keep people working so that these jobs would be there.

I will tell you this. Most folks, like the small business owner whom I talked about today, are offended when they hear about backroom negotiations and private negotiations. What they want to see is action. They want to see us on this floor. They are probably a little bit amused that there is not one single Democrat coming down here to defend their vote—not one. They are not down here. They are not speaking up as to why they do not want to help.

What are they willing to do? The House is gone. They have been gone now for 10 days. They are not here. They are not working. Speaker PELOSI came back. NANCY came right back into town and threw a grenade into the negotiations. She wants to write her own bill.

That bill is something. I have to tell you, I looked through it before I came down here because I thought, surely, they are not as far off the reservation as I was beginning to hear. Yes, they are. They want tax credits for solar energy and wind energy, which has no place in negotiating a package to address the issues from COVID-19. It has zero connection to that. Tax credits for solar energy is one of their big wishes in the Green New Deal. They have been all about it. This is where they are going to put their emphasis.

They had one of their Members of leadership say the global coronavirus pandemic is a “tremendous opportunity to restrict things to fit a progressive vision.” There they go. There they go again. Don't let this crisis go to waste. Let's load this up. This is the vehicle that is moving. Here we go. This is a way we can get the Green New

Deal. This is how we can realize our socialist dreams. This is how we go for government control. You got it, baby. This bill is moving. Let's load this up.

Also, they have provisions in here to force employers to give special treatment to Big Labor. That has nothing to do with solving this crisis that we face right now. It has nothing to do with the small business owner figuring out if they are going to lay people off or they are going to be able to meet payroll.

Since I have been down here on this floor, I have had two phone calls. One was from somebody in the hotel business and another from somebody with a real estate firm saying: Help me. Help me with this. Should we lay them off? Are you all going to get something done? Is this going to be something that will help us?

Another of her dreams is early voting. She wants to have early voting and day-of voting. Yes. Let's pack the ballot box. Here we go.

And all these States, by the way—California, Illinois, New York—States that cannot manage their affairs; States that are running up their State income tax; States that have more debt than revenue—come on, let's bail them out. This is the vehicle. We can go ahead and help these blue States. Send them the money because they have been reckless with the taxpayers' dollar. Bail them out.

New emission standards for the airlines. Let me tell you something. Wanting to make the airline industry carbon neutral by 2025 is a debate to have another day. I want to tell you something right now. You have heard people talk about being the only person on the plane or 1 of 14 on the plane, 1 of 5 on the plane. Right now, keeping the planes flying is the issue because until we have answers for this health crisis, people are not going to go back to work and planes are not going to fly. Common sense would go a long way in these discussions.

They also want to micromanage corporate boards. They want total and complete student loan forgiveness. They wanted \$20 billion to bail out the Postal Service. I could go on and on.

It is the socialist progressive wish list. Throw it all out there and then blame it on us when they don't get it. Try to force some of it onto the bill. There were Democratic Senators that helped to negotiate this bill. They got many provisions in this bill that they wanted.

I didn't get everything I wanted. I thought, my goodness, I prefer to see that we would refund all of the income tax you paid this year for individuals and businesses. The system is set up, and money could be backed out.

I like the payroll tax holiday. That is something that, as a conservative, I have supported for quite a while. Why should anybody have to pay the Federal Government for the privilege of hiring somebody and why should an employee have to pay the Federal Gov-

ernment for the privilege of working? It is common sense.

I also would have liked to have seen us use the employment security system for getting money to employees. It is set up. It is coordinated with the States.

These are all things I would have liked to have seen. I knew I wasn't going to get everything I wanted.

But I will tell you this. When I read that there is a letter, a “Dear Colleague” letter that has gone out in the House from Speaker PELOSI, and she has boasted that the majority leader had to postpone the vote on the motion to proceed and thanks to the minority leader, they didn't get the 60 votes required—I look at that, and I think, what kind of joy do you take in that? Here was a measure that had bipartisan support in the Senate. It was a measure that would bring relief to small businesses and to families and to friends who are receiving a diagnosis—a positive test for COVID-19—and people who are worried about how they are going to be payrolled this week, workers who are worried if they are going to have a job, small business owners who are crying inside because they do not know what we are going to do. Yet our colleagues across the aisle are absent from the floor and the colleagues on the other side of the Dome have been away for 10 days, and they are not offering a rational solution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President: “This is a tremendous opportunity to restructure things to fit our vision.”

This is an opportunity to fit our vision.

That is a quote—not from some Communist activist leader somewhere in the United States, not from some Third World general. No, that is from the third ranking Democrat in the House of Representatives. Let that sink in for a minute.

Read it again: “This is a tremendous opportunity to restructure things to fit our vision.”

I thought a bogus impeachment was shameful enough but clearly not. People in this country are dying. They are dying, literally. People are losing their jobs every day, literally. More and more people are getting sick every day. And that is why Senators rushed back here. We rushed back here to pass the House bipartisan legislation that was negotiated between the President and Speaker PELOSI.

Then we let both sides work on the next steps. We passed that bill within less than 24 hours of receiving it from the House. As imperfect as it was, we passed it with 90 Senators voting for it. That is how bipartisan works. We worked around the clock to craft a plan, and we succeeded.

Here we sit, listening to our Democratic colleagues pretend this is a partisan plan, as if they weren't sitting in the room as it was being negotiated, and many of their ideas are in this bill.

Why are they doing that? I will tell you why they are doing it. When we see a rising body count, they see a political opportunity. Shame on them. The Trump derangement syndrome is accelerating the coronavirus. They should be ashamed of themselves. They see a chance to impose their vision—their leftwing, radical vision on our country because they think they can force it past us during this crisis. Their extreme partisan obstruction has blinded them.

What has happened to this place? Why are they even here?

Attempts to work across the aisle—honest attempts, attempts by rank-and-file Republicans and rank-and-file Democrats—have resulted in our Democratic colleagues having created a revisionist view of what we have been doing, and it has resulted in blind, political opportunism just to advance their extreme leftwing agenda—an agenda that includes things like the Green New Deal, which is something that actually had a vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Guess how many of them voted for it—none. It was that nutty—none. Yet, now, that is the agenda. That is their vision. That is the opportunity they see.

How about socialism for the entire economy? It was not enough just for the energy sector. It was not enough just for the healthcare sector. It was not enough just for the manufacturing sector. Let's just have socialism. Let's debate which Democratic Presidential candidate is the best Socialist. How about hurting our farmers, our ranchers, our oil workers, our truckdrivers, our restaurant owners, our manufacturers, or our welders—everybody?

We are not even asking them to vote on this plan. The vote last night was not on the bill, and the vote this afternoon was not on the bill. It was simply a procedural vote to begin the debate, to continue the negotiations on the bill. Not one moment would have been lost. Guess what. Now over a day has been lost while we have dithered. We are asking—when we do finally agree to help the American people—that instead of killing the economy and the jobs, as they have been doing, that we be ready to act on the bill. No, that is not good enough for them.

Many of my colleagues have talked about what is in the bill. There is \$4 billion for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Do you think it could use it?

How about \$9 billion for child nutrition? Do you care, Democrats, about child nutrition? We have often heard you talk about it. Where is it now?

How about \$20 billion for veterans? Do they not care about that?

How about \$50 billion for our farmers? I spoke about it. How about \$75 billion for our healthcare providers? Do you think your healthcare providers could use a little more assistance, Democrats? I think they could, and they need it now. They needed it yesterday.

How about \$350 billion for the small businesses that employ all of those people who are now getting fired because they can't keep their doors open? Yet that is not even worth a debate to our Democratic colleagues. Oh, no.

Apparently, it is now all back open for debate. The reports today are that the minority leader is holding the \$50 billion for farmers hostage so they can get more of the opportunity to restructure things to fit their vision.

Apparently, the majority leader either forgot or he never knew that food doesn't come from the deli.

Mr. Minority Leader, food comes from the farmer. There is no sandwich in the New York deli without the farmers' growing the grain. There is no meat in that sandwich without the ranchers' raising the livestock. No, they don't make that food in the deli, Mr. Minority Leader.

Who started all of this? It was not he. He tried to be helpful for a while or at least it appeared so. No, it was not he. It was not even an uprising of the rank-and-file Democrats who have been filing in, occasionally, into this Chamber. It wasn't even the breakdown in negotiations between the Republicans and the Democrats. It was the House Speaker, NANCY PELOSI, who flew in here on an airplane that was powered by fossil fuels. Maybe those fossil fuels were even made by some oil from Alaska or North Dakota or Texas. She demanded an expansion of—what?—the renewable energy tax credits and other parts of her extreme leftwing, radical, partisan agenda.

What in the hell does that have to do with the coronavirus?

The absurdity of it speaks for itself. That is what we have learned to expect from the majority of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle and in the other Chamber of Congress—ever since the freshman Democrat from New York became the de facto Speaker of the House. That is the House. We are not the House. We are the Senate. We are supposed to be the adults in the room. Some of our colleagues are here, acting like petulant children when there are people who are suffering and who don't know what to do or where to turn for help. They are turning to us. We are it. We are the help. We are driving the ambulance. All the while, the Speaker of the House tries to steer us into the ditch while the minority leader of the Senate hangs on for dear life in the passenger's seat.

Why would those people come to us for help anymore? The House Speaker doesn't care about them. For crying out loud, she cares about renewable fuel tax credits. Where is rural America supposed to go? The Democratic leader sees them as, simply, political pawns. Being held hostage is \$50 billion for farmers. Let's hold that one up. Maybe we could get more of what fits our vision, our radical agenda.

Apparently, helping these people doesn't matter to them. Well, I have news for him. I have news for the mi-

nority leader. While the Democrats dither, Americans are dying. That is a real fact. Let's get back in here tonight, and let's pass this legislation. Let's get it done and get the money to the people who need it the most.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULIVAN). The Senator from Georgia.

Mrs. LOEFFLER. Mr. President, once again, I stood at this podium yesterday and called on the Senate to put politics aside and deliver critical relief to the American people, many of whom are on the frontlines of this war. Yet CHUCK SCHUMER and the Senate Democrats have turned their backs on them, having been encouraged by NANCY PELOSI.

People are getting sick. They are worried about their families. They are losing their jobs. Schools are closed. Small businesses are days away from shutting their doors, and hospitals are running out of equipment, cash, and room. Doctors and nurses are working around the clock, and they are our first line of defense. People are suffering.

A hospital in Tifton, GA, faces such severe equipment shortages that it is forced to wear trash bags as protection. Many rural hospitals in Georgia only have days of operating cash left. Also, in rural Georgia, children go to the bus stops to pick up their local papers. That is their education for the day while their schools are closed.

In Cartersville, GA, Table 20 was forced to lay off nearly all of its staff just to remain open, like too many others.

In Athens, GA, the virus has turned a college town into a ghost town, and the virus is devastating its economy, like too many others.

All over the State, waiters, waitresses, car salesmen, mechanics, farmers, and shopkeepers wonder: How will I possibly care for my family?

For the last 2 weeks, I have been continuously talking with the people of Georgia: with cancer patients whose procedures have been canceled; with families whose entire livelihoods have been wiped out; with people in businesses who can't pay the rent, the mortgage, the car payment, get groceries, or get lifesaving tests and procedures; and with families who have been forced to cancel weddings and funerals.

While the effects of this disease tear through our country, thousands of Americans are infected, and millions face layoffs. They are fighting with all they have. Yet what are SCHUMER and PELOSI doing? Nothing. The Democrats continue to politicize this rescue. How many people must be hurt for them to leave their selfish partisanship behind and get relief to our fellow Americans?

While the rest of America comes together, like the Savannah Salvation Army that holds church services outside or like Meals on Wheels that delivers meals to seniors, the Democrats are playing games and holding hostage desperately needed relief. America does not deserve this. NANCY PELOSI and

CHUCK SCHUMER are putting solar panels ahead of people. Meanwhile, President Trump and his administration are working around the clock to address this crisis while the Democrats are continuing the resistance.

I know the folks at home see it for what it is—politicians who will not miss their own paychecks or their own benefits or who will not miss their home payments or their car payments. They are safely tucked away behind their coffee carts in their offices and are taking advantage of the moment—pushing ideas that could never pass in Congress.

A bipartisan bill was ready to go this weekend. This delay is entirely on their backs. It is the worst of Washington, and it is disgusting. The American people must hold the Democrats to account. I will keep fighting for Georgians and all Americans with my colleagues, and I will not leave here until our work is done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, 24 hours ago, we thought we would have this legislation passed and that it would be on its way to the House of Representatives and, soon this week, on its way to the President for his signature so we could respond to the crisis we are in. This legislation about which you have heard several speeches tonight is the answer to the crisis—the economic crisis—just like two other pieces of legislation we passed in the last 2 weeks that were signed by the President and that responded to the public health crisis.

America is suffering. I don't have to tell you the stories of personal hardship and the loss—particularly economic but now real life loss—because of this virus. This serious health crisis is quickly becoming a serious economic crisis. Through no fault of their own, Americans have been sidelined to fight the virus, and the economy is unraveling as a result of the public health crisis. Every hour, more people are being laid off. Every hour, more businesses are closing their doors. Every hour, families are being forced to figure out how they are going to pay their bills.

Without a doubt, this is a crisis. Hundreds of thousands of people this week are going to the unemployment office, but you wouldn't know it by watching the Senate Democrats as they drag their feet on much needed relief for Americans. It is not just for Americans; it is to get the entire economy moving.

So how has this evolved to the point that it has now?

No. 1, last night and not once today but twice today—so three times—we tried to get this bill up on the U.S. Senate floor just for debate. We have been filibustered on procedural votes just to allow us to debate this relief package. It is a package that we have been working on in a bipartisan way for several days now.

This sort of activity by the Democratic Senators is outrageous. They are blocking a bill that includes relief that we all agree is needed for the American people. They say this wasn't a bipartisan effort. That is what we have heard all day. Really? Well, I have had very good working relationships, very good dialogue, and some disagreement but a coming together with several of my Democratic colleague on the Committee on Finance in meetings on Friday and Saturday to work out a bipartisan bill that we could be voting on now. So they say it was not a bipartisan effort. Really? Then who were all of those people who were sitting in the same room I was, negotiating around the clock for multiple days?

The fact is, we have worked with the Democrats on this bill, and we have worked in good faith together—both sides. We have included many provisions the Democrats want because we started with what the Republicans thought was a good bill in order to solve these economic problems. We had to change some Republican issues, and we had to add some Democratic issues. In fact, they don't want to admit it of the legislation, but many of my colleagues on the other side, on just this very day, have come to the Senate floor to brag about the areas on which we agree. These are provisions in this bill. But in the same breath, they call this a partisan bill. That makes no sense. Why would they want to say that a bill that we worked on for several days, working out differences between Democrats and Republicans, is a partisan bill?

They also claim that this bill contains so-called corporate bailouts and not enough funding for workers and healthcare providers.

Well, let me say that loaning money to small business and big business that has to be paid back—in the case of small business under this bill, I have to admit that if they have fewer than 500 employees and they get benefit from it and they don't lay anybody off, it will be a forgiven loan. But for really large corporations—let's say like getting the airlines flying again because the public depends on them and because there are millions of jobs connected with the airlines—giving them loans is a bailout? No, it is not. It is a jobs bill so those millions of people working for the airlines can continue to work and the flying public can fly when they want to fly.

That is my response to the fact that this is not a corporate bailout like they want you to believe.

And no help for individuals? Let's look at the facts for helping individuals.

This bill would send \$1,200 to almost every American immediately; couples, \$2,400; and families would get \$500 for each child. It is meant that this money would be out to these families who need this help just as fast as the IRS can get it out. And it is no different from what we did in 2008 with the great

recession that we were going into at that particular time.

This bill also responds to what Democrats asked us to do: Beef up the unemployment insurance program, benefiting those people laid off.

Now, all 50 States have a different figure for what unemployment pays unemployed people in that particular State. But whatever that figure is, our bill would add \$600 per week for a period of 3 months. And if somebody says "Well, that is not long enough," well, if we don't get this economy turned around in 3 months, we are going to be here doing it all again anyway.

But it beefs up the unemployment by \$600 in each of those States on top of what those States are already paying out. The unemployment part of this bill makes unemployment benefits available to more Americans than ever before.

Now, I am chairman of the Finance Committee. These are just the provisions in the Finance Committee bill. There were three other bipartisan groups of people working on other parts of the economy to get this bill put together to help unemployed people.

Our bill, though, in the Finance Committee also includes assistance for businesses of all sizes. It keeps them afloat so that folks have a job to go back to when they come out of this pandemic. So don't try to say that this bill doesn't help workers.

The bill also includes about \$100 billion for healthcare workers and helps to speed up delivery of treatments and helps to get potential vaccines developed a lot faster. This bill also helps health professionals.

But it helps nobody—nobody gets any help—as long as the Congress sits on its thumb, and that is what we have been doing all day, when this bill could have been passed and sent to the House.

My colleagues complain that this unprecedented aid package is not sufficient. I don't know what the exact figure is at this point because there are still some negotiations going on, but the last I heard it was fast approaching \$2 trillion. Somehow, that is not enough.

They are saying it is not enough help. So while they are saying it is not enough help, nobody is getting any help. I don't understand it.

As I have already alluded to, we passed phase 1 legislation to help 2 weeks ago; we passed phase 2 last week; we are working on phase 3. So if we need more help down the road, we will have that opportunity when we know for sure what the situation is. We don't have to address the next 10 years in what they are trying to negotiate now. We can address these problems if we don't get the pandemic under control by then.

So there is no excuse for not delivering what we can do this very day. Instead, the Democrats are playing politics while the rest of the country suffers, while there is great anxiety out

there, while they are looking to their leaders for help and not getting it.

If you don't think this is political, just look at the political wish list that PELOSI has put out. The scholar of the U.S. Senate, Senator SASSE, is going to speak about that, I think, coming up here, and you will see a picture of this great big bill that she put forward. But just let me name two or three things that I know about because I haven't read an 1,100-page bill like he probably has.

They want to erase the Postal Service debt. What does that have to do with hundreds of thousands of people going to the unemployment office today?

They want to require same-day voter registration. What does voter registration have to do with the crisis of unemployment and the pandemic that we are facing today?

They want to saddle the airlines with crippling new emission standards. What does that have to do with the unemployed today, the people who are suffering, the anxiety that is out there that people have because they don't know how bad this situation is and they know they are losing their job?

This legislation also wants to resurrect the Green New Deal at the same time families are losing their income.

My colleagues, now is just not the time for this sort of horseplay. There will be plenty of opportunities to debate these policies later, not when we have a crisis on our hands—in other words, not now.

Just a few days ago, our bipartisan talks were going very well. We made incredible progress over the course of the few days that we put this together, so we have a bipartisan bill.

So to my Democratic colleagues, please put your swords away. Please focus on the task at hand. Please stop the delaying tactics and the politicking. America needs us to deliver. Now is not the time for more foot-dragging and procedural delays.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, my chairman on the Finance Committee, Chairman GRASSLEY, who just left the floor, called me a scholar, and I think he meant it as a compliment, but it doesn't feel like that today.

It actually feels like the fact that I have been reading this this afternoon is a sign of the fact that this institution is broken in significant ways, and there are not a lot of productive things happening outside a group of four people who are renegotiating a car deal again and again and again and again.

I did spend a good chunk of my afternoon reading these 1,119 pages. You might wonder what this is. This is NANCY PELOSI's last-minute additional Christmas wish list of progressive items that she wants added to the coronavirus relief bill that has been being negotiated here over the course of the last 96 or so hours.

I wanted to read this because I think we owe it to our constituents to know what is in bills before people pass them. And I want to say, in full disclosure, the wish list keeps growing so rapidly and radically that this thing could be like 50 percent obsolete since 3 or 4 hours ago when I started digging into it. There may be another bill that is another 1,200 pages thick.

But this is the one that I have been reading today, and the Speaker has obviously decided that she doesn't want to waste any crisis.

The American people face two unprecedented emergencies. We face a public health emergency that is genuinely disastrous, and we face a consequent resultant economic emergency that puts at risk lots and lots of families' livelihoods, lots of dinner tables around the country.

There are 5,997,000 firms in the United States—so just a hair shy of 6 million firms in the United States. And lots and lots and lots of those—the overwhelming majority of firms—and 47 percent of all employment are small businesses in America. These are firms of 500 or fewer employees. These are family businesses. These are corner stores. Lots and lots and lots of these people live on an average—their businesses live on an average—of 16 days of cash.

So when the country is shut down in the midst of something like the coronavirus crisis, there are lots of businesses that have only about 2 weeks before they may cease to exist and just go poof or go down some other pathway that leads them to become dependencies of the State.

So we have two massive crises in this country—one public health and one economic. And this place often lies and pretends that there is some piece of legislation that can solve every problem on Earth. That isn't true, but in this case, both of these emergencies need lots and lots of help and bandaids and salve and lifelines, life preservers from this institution, and that is why so many people around here have been working all night overnight 3 or 4 days in a row.

A number of us have been in this Chamber until midnight or 1 a.m. multiple nights. I am a 4 a.m. wake-up guy, so I am usually in bed by 9 p.m. When I am here at midnight or 1 a.m., it is well past a period of coherence. So when we are working around the clock, it is because there is an emergency.

Lots and lots and lots of stuff in this 1,119-page additional bid from NANCY PELOSI have nothing to do with the coronavirus emergency.

So I want to take us through some of what is in this piece of legislation, but I am going to pull up for a minute as I recognize that the majority leader, who is at the center of this negotiation, has entered the Chamber. So I am going to yield to him and let him make whatever updates he wants to give us in this Chamber, and then I will return to this piece of legislation after the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I say to my friend from Nebraska that I will be very brief.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 157, H.R. 748, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Pat Roberts, Ben Sasse, Deb Fischer, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John Hoeven, Tom Cotton, James E. Risch, Lamar Alexander, Bill Cassidy, David Perdue, Marco Rubio, John Cornyn, Thom Tillis, Steve Daines, Michael B. Enzi.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call for the cloture motion be waived.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, just one further observation, we will not be having any votes tonight.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I want to be clear. This negotiation has been messy. There is lots and lots in this bill that I don't like. There is lots in this bill that is also critically important and urgent for the American people.

There are a bunch of things in here that I think stink. I don't like firm-specific money in legislation. So I don't like much of the airlines section of this bill. The airlines didn't do anything wrong at this moment when all their travelers fall off because of the pandemic before them, but there are pieces of the way any legislation like this is written, when it has specific firms in it, that I dislike and I think should be done more effectively over time. But this is following a model of how these portions of legislation have been written around here in the past.

I don't like the direct payments that Washington is going to try to renew long after the American people have defeated the coronavirus. There is a lot in this legislation that I don't like.

But there are things we should all be applauding. This legislation tries to turbocharge vaccine development. We need what our friend, the Senator from Montana, called the Manhattan Project for the vaccine accelerator. We need to go lots faster figuring out how to remove barriers to enable companies at this time that seek to be effective over efficient in ways that pluralize lots and lots of pharmaceutical firms competing all at once and taking three or four steps of the vaccine development process and trying to run them in parallel

instead of in sequence, because the American people and the world need this vaccine. There are things to be proud of in that part of the legislation.

I like the fact that this legislation—not the Pelosi legislation, but the composite compromise bill that the Senate has been working on over the last four days—tries to help small businesses stay alive during this period of zero revenue with well-structured loans. I think that Senators RUBIO and COLLINS and their two Democratic colleagues on the other side of the aisle have done a really good job. It is a crazy, eye-popping pricetag at about \$350 billion, this small business loan program, but it is a necessity at this moment, and it is legislation that people should be proud of.

I like the fact that this bill works in the appropriations section—not the whole bill, not the whole draft text, as I wish it would. But in the appropriations section, it works hard to get more than 51 percent of the appropriations section of the money to Governors to allow them to make differentiated spending decisions, which they can make more effectively than we can make in Washington, DC, where we look out across 325 million people in an undifferentiated way. Our Governors are better at building public-private partnerships than the Congress is.

In my State, Omaha and Lincoln have different economics than the rural parts of the State, but Omaha and Lincoln are different than Nashville and Memphis. And National and Memphis are different than L.A. and Seattle. So this bill works hard to try to take a big chunk—a majority of the appropriations section of the legislation—and drive it back to Governors.

There are things that are good in this bill. There are things that I think are weak and clunky in this bill, but it was negotiated in a bipartisan way in good faith on topics and issues that were related to the coronavirus emergency. It wasn't a Republican bill. It wasn't a Democratic bill. It certainly isn't my favorite bill or piece of legislation around here, but it was a good-faith, bipartisan attempt that people were negotiating on all weekend.

But, instead of taking that legislation—urgent, necessary legislation—and passing it quickly, Democrats have now decided to allow Speaker PELOSI to block it through proxies here in the Senate so she can rewrite the bill with a ton of crap that has absolutely nothing to do with the public health emergency that we face at this moment.

So I have been reading the legislation this afternoon. We have families suffering and small businesses that are closing literally by the hour. We have doctors fighting to prevent their hospitals from being oversubscribed and overwhelmed, and what is Speaker PELOSI trying to do? She is trying to take hostages about her dream legislation—all sorts of dream legislative provisions that have nothing to do with this moment—and say: The American public can't get access to the public health

piece of legislation or the economic relief pieces of legislation unless she gets hostages that are entirely unrelated to this moment.

We are better than that. Democrats in the Senate are better than that. Many of them are privately embarrassed about this. I don't understand how they voted today to filibuster this bill for a second time when in private many of them tell us: Well, this is just part of the negotiation and our leaders want us to vote this way, but I am really uncomfortable with it because I don't think we should be dealing with unrelated issues.

I had multiple Democrats today tell me they don't think they should be dealing with unrelated issues, things that are not about the health and economic emergencies before the Nation.

Here is why we stopped. Here is why the bill that is before us, again, is not my favorite piece of legislation—not Republicans, not Democrats—but a bipartisan, good-faith piece of legislation. The reason we are not voting on it is because 1,119 pages of new NANCY PELOSI demands that we should consider.

I promise you that every Washington, DC, lobbyist right now has been combing over these 1,200 pages this afternoon because they wonder what goodies they can claim credit for or what goodies that are against their sector they should go against.

We shouldn't be debating anything in an emergency moment like this with another 1,119 pages being dropped in at the last minute with other demands. So I decided to start digging through it.

Let me give you a few highlights—or low lights. Here is page 421, line 22:

(1) MINIMUM STUDENT LOAN RELIEF AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 NATIONAL EMERGENCY.—Not later than 270 days after the last day of the COVID-19 emergency period. . . .

Think about what this means. Not later than 270 days—that is 9 months after the emergency is over. Then the Secretary of Education has to do all this new stuff.

Nobody who wants student debt loan forgiveness should pretend this is about getting emergency cash into the economy for liquidity or solvency, because the NANCY PELOSI demand about loan forgiveness says here that this is for something 9 months after the emergency.

This is something that many Democrats want. As a former college president, I actually think this is a bad idea, but there are intellectually defensible reasons to argue for it. There are reasonable cases to be made, but they have tried to make them in the past and not been able to pass the legislation, and it has nothing to do with the coronavirus.

Not later than 270 days after the last day of the COVID-19 emergency period, the Secretaries concerned shall jointly carry out a program under which a qualified borrower, with respect to the covered loans and private

education of loans of such qualified borrower, shall receive in accordance with paragraph (3) an amount equal to the lesser of the following:

(A) The total amount of each covered loan and each private education loan of the borrower; or

(B) \$10,000.

So what this says is you can feel the Bern with a \$10,000 public and private loan cancellation project a year in the future, or depending on how long this emergency goes, this emergency could be with us through a trough in the late summer and another peak in the fall and winter. We may be in the emergency for more than a year. So Speaker PELOSI says: Well, the Cabinet officials in the executive branch shouldn't probably be burdened with this now because it obviously has nothing to do with the coronavirus, but in the future we want to bake into law a \$10,000 loan forgiveness program that has nothing to do with coronavirus.

That is wrong. This institution has been bleeding public trust for a long time. When we pass a \$2 trillion piece of legislation in the middle of an emergency, there are going to be lots of things wrong with it. There are going to be lots of reasons why the public looks back and says: Why aren't you all more competent? Why couldn't you have done this better? Why wouldn't you have done that better? Boy, this feels clunky. Why would these people be included in the direct payments, but those people wouldn't? You have to earn \$2,500, but we are using the 2018 tax returns to be able to determine whether or not you earned your \$2,500 to be able to qualify for the \$1,200 per family, and it phases out from 75 to \$95,000? There are a lot of hard-policy, mechanical, technical issues that need to be navigated, and some of them will be imperfect.

And later, the public will say: Why did you do it this way instead of this way? And those will be fair questions. We will have to defend the members of the task forces who wrote that part of the legislation—a bipartisan task force that worked on that piece of legislation all weekend.

But what will be completely impossible is to tell the public: Well, the reason we did the loan forgiveness program, which had nothing to do with coronavirus, this way rather than that way was because—why?—because it was a northbound train and people could load it with a whole bunch of swampy stuff.

You may believe in loan forgiveness. Make the case and win an argument for loan forgiveness. Don't do it on the backs of a national emergency, when in Nebraska I have families calling me from Omaha where spouses have just been put in new institutions in the last 2 or 3 weeks because of declining dementia, because of Alzheimer's. And as soon as they got put in an institution, that institution got put on a quarantine lockdown, and a husband is only in his late sixties, but he is losing his entire mind and memory. He doesn't

understand why he is there, and his wife and kids can't visit him anymore, and he doesn't know what the heck is going on.

That is a genuine tragedy. That is not an occasion for NANCY PELOSI to try to get a loan forgiveness program done that she couldn't get done by regular legislation. It is wrong, and the Democrats in this body, most of them, know it is wrong. None of them are going to come down here and make an argument. None of the 47 Democrats in the Senate are going to come to the floor of the Senate and say: You know what we ought to do during this national emergency? We ought to do a student loan forgiveness program right now.

Someone might mention it in a long list, implying that the program may have to do with liquidity. But if you actually read what happens in the legislation, there is no loan forgiveness until 270 days after the coronavirus national emergency is over.

Page 570. Not even a coronavirus can put a pause on our culture wars. Line 14:

The Congressional COVID-19 Aid Oversight Panel in conjunction with SIGTARP—

I don't know what that acronym means—

shall collect diversity data from any corporation that receives Federal aid related to COVID-19, and issue a report that will be made publicly available no later than one year after the disbursement of funds. In addition to any other data, the report shall include the following:

(1) **EMPLOYEE DEMOGRAPHICS.**—The gender, race, and ethnic identity (and to the extent possible, results disaggregated by ethnic group) of [all] the corporation's employees, as otherwise known or provided voluntarily for the total number of employees (full- and part-time). . . .

I am just going to skip ahead a couple of paragraphs.

(3) **PAY EQUITY.**—A comparison of pay amongst racial and ethnic minorities (and to the extent possible, results disaggregated by ethnic group) as compared to their white counterparts and a comparison of pay between men and women for similar roles and assignments.

(4) **CORPORATE BOARD DIVERSITY.**—Corporate board demographic data, including total number of board members, gender, race and ethnic identity of board members. . . .

Et cetera, et cetera—I am skipping ahead here.

Page 572, the next page:

(e) **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION OF FICES.**—Any corporation that receives Federal aid related to COVID-19 must maintain officials and budget dedicated to diversity and inclusion initiatives for no less than 5 years after. . . .

Blah, blah, blah—none of this has anything to do with the coronavirus. There are all sorts of real racial issues in America that need to be addressed, but none of this has anything to do with the coronavirus. If you want to argue for this legislation, argue for this legislation once people in nursing homes in Nebraska aren't being locked out of being able to visit their family members with Alzheimer's and dementia.

Page 681, line 16:

“SEC. 325. SAME DAY REGISTRATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—

“(1) **REGISTRATION.**—Each State shall permit any eligible individual on the day of a Federal election and on any day when voting, including early voting, is permitted for a Federal election . . . to register to vote in such election at the polling place using a form that meets the requirements under section 9(b) of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (or, if the individual is already registered to vote, to revise any of the individual's registration information); and

“(B) to cast a vote in such election.

“(2) **EXCEPTION.**—The requirements under paragraph (1) shall not apply to a State in which, under a State law in effect continuously on or after the date of the enactment of this section. . . .

You see, what this is about is same-day voter registration, because November 3 is just 225 days away, and if there is anything the American people are worried right now about, it is that they would like Washington, DC, to take away the authority of 50 secretaries of State and determine how you conduct local elections in America.

This has absolutely nothing to do with coronavirus—absolutely nothing to do with coronavirus. This isn't a Republican v. Democratic scream. This is nonsense. This is where 99 percent of the American public, if they were in this Gallery, would be shaking their head and rolling their eyes and saying: What? You guys are trying to decide that the Federal Government should, for the first time in U.S. history, change the way local elections are conducted by Secretaries of State in America? By the way, there is no one in the Gallery for a reason—because the Gallery is shut down because we are in the middle of a pandemic.

So this probably isn't the time to be having a debate about whether the Federal Government should micro-manage the way our 50 States conduct their elections. I think this is a bad idea. But if you want to argue for this idea, let's do it as soon as the pandemic is over. Come and actually make an argument. Quit trying to exploit the crisis.

Page 725—there is almost no section of American life for government that can't be touched in an emergency if you want to play exploited politics.

Line 12:

DIVISION N—U.S. POSTAL SERVICE PROVISIONS

Because, of course, in the middle of a pandemic, do you know what the American people want? They want to have a labor fight about the Postal Service.

SEC. 140001. ELIMINATION OF USPS DEBT; ADDITIONAL BORROWING AUTHORITY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law—

(1) any outstanding debt of the United States Postal Service owed to the Treasury pursuant to sections 2005 and 2011 of title 5, United States Code, on the date of the enactment of this Act is hereby canceled; and

(2) after the date of the enactment of this Act, the United States Postal Service is authorized to borrow money from the Treasury in an amount not to exceed—

I have got to count all these numbers—

\$15,000,000,000 to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Postal Service, including those under title 39, United States Code, and the Secretary of the Treasury shall lend up to such amount at the request of the Postal Service.

(b) **REPEAL OF FISCAL YEAR BORROWING LIMIT.**—Section 2005(a)(1) of title 39, United States Code, is amended by striking “In any one fiscal year,” and all that follows through the period.

Please, Senate Democrats, you don't believe that this is good governance. Somebody please come to the floor and defend why we are doing a Postal Service bailout in the middle of an emergency.

I know that BERNIE SANDERS believes in Postal Service reform. I don't agree with Senator SANDERS on this, but he is actually pretty thoughtful about it. He spent a lot of time thinking about how you might bail out the Postal Service. So if BERNIE SANDERS wants to argue for a Postal Service bailout, he should make that case. I haven't been here all day, but I have presided a couple of hours. I haven't heard a single Democrat come to the floor and argue for a Postal Service bailout.

Somebody please come back to the floor and at least stand in the light of day before the American people and say the stuff NANCY PELOSI is voting for you think is a good idea to do in the middle of this national health emergency.

Page 768, line 7:

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, subject to the requirements of this subsection, the wage rate in effect under section (a)(1) with respect to an employee of an employer described in paragraph (2), or any individual who provides labor or services for remuneration for such employer, regardless of whether the individual is classified as an independent contractor or otherwise by such employer, shall be not less than \$15.00 per hour.

So while businesses are struggling to make ends meet—and we are seeing lots and lots of small businesses go bankrupt in all 50 States in America today. Businesses are going bankrupt in America today in all 50 of the States that we represent. Speaker PELOSI wants to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

I used to be a professor. I am a business guy by background, but I was a history professor for a long time, and when I would teach, I taught the Socratic method when I taught a seminar. In a lecture class, it is different, but in a seminar, if I had 12 students or I had 15 students in a class, I would regularly try to frame up a given weekly seminar, and I would try to figure out how to map a debate where you could get about half the people in the class on each side of a debate.

If it ended up that the debate was off-weighted and there was a minority group and a majority group, I would tend to join the minority group, regardless of what was the issue, and I would try to fight for the minority position just to help spice up the debate and make it more interesting.

I think a \$15 minimum wage is really bad economics, but I have argued for it many, many times in class because there are intellectually coherent reasons to argue for it. I don't think it works. And if we weren't dealing with the pandemic in King County, WA, one of the things we might talk about in this body is how the \$15 minimum wage has worked out in Seattle. Their public was overwhelmingly in favor of it a couple of years ago, and now there is a huge move against it because people realized what a \$15 minimum wage actually does. It accelerates the marginalization and the capitalization and the layoffs of people making between \$9 and \$14 an hour. That is what it actually does. It speeds automation.

So I would love it if anybody who is a primary breadwinner in the house was earning way more than \$15 an hour. I would love that to be reality in American life. But here are two facts you need to know.

Fact No. 1, last time I checked the data, 89 percent of everybody who made the minimum wage in America wasn't a primary wage earner. They were a high school kid; they were a college student getting their first job; they were working part time while they were in school; or they just graduated high school, and they hadn't figured out their long-term path. Maybe they were in trade school, but they were working a minimum-wage job and still lived at mom and dad's house or maybe they were a 65-year-old aunt who lived with a family that the rest of the house was self-sufficient, but her wages augmented the family's income. Eighty-nine percent of the people who make the minimum wage in America are not the primary wage earner or breadwinner in their family, but of the 11 percent who are, the idea that you can just raise the minimum wage to any amount—I mean, if you just think good intentions are sufficient, then why \$15?

For heaven's sake, \$15 an hour on a 2,000-hour work year, 40 hours a week times 50 weeks, that makes \$30,000 a year. It is really hard to get by on \$30,000 a year. If you think good intentions are enough, \$15 isn't enough. Why not have a minimum wage of \$25? Why not \$30 an hour? The reason is because it doesn't actually work. If you just raise the minimum wage to a different level than the marginal contribution value of that job, what happens is the firms either cease to exist or people automate more rapidly.

There are reasonable arguments to be made—certainly there are emotional and humanitarian arguments to be made—for wanting a \$15 minimum wage. But wanting a \$15 minimum wage is an argument you should make. It is not something you do in the midst of a public health emergency, and it is certainly not something you do in the midst of a public health emergency where lots and lots of small businesses are ceasing to exist because the \$15 minimum wage will just drive more people out of business.

So it would be better to have a 15-dollar-an-hour job than an 11-dollar-an-hour job, but it would be better to have an 11-dollar-an-hour job than no job. So if you are going to debate a \$15 minimum wage, please do it in the light of day. What Speaker PELOSI is doing here is wrong.

Page 803. This one goes on for a bunch of pages, so I will jump across. Line 10:

SEC. 704. AIRLINE CARBON EMISSIONS OFFSETS AND GOALS.

(a) CARBON OFFSETTING PROGRAM—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall require each air carrier receiving assistance under section 101, to fully offset the annual carbon emissions of such air carriers for domestic flights beginning in 2025 . . .

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall require each air carrier receiving assistance under section 101 to—

(A) make and achieve a binding commitment to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions attributable to the domestic flights of such air carrier in every calendar year, beginning with 2021, on a path consistent with a 25 percent reduction in the aviation sector's emissions from 2005 levels by 2035, and a 50 percent reduction in the sector's emissions from 2005 level to apply by the year 2050.

This is like something out of the Green New Deal for the age of COVID-19, but it is just the technocratic piece for airline emissions—and here we are dealing with the part about airline emissions from the year 2035 to the year 2050.

If you have been looking at the data this afternoon, one of things that Scott Gottlieb has been talking a lot about today is we see that the hospitalization rates and the case fatality rate for the 45- to 54-year-old hospital admissions, COVID-19 patients in the United States, look a lot worse than we thought they were a week ago. There are some things on the Italy curve that are scary and ugly. There are some pieces of it where we might think there are a little bits of hopeful signs that as we have a lot more positive tests—but we know we simultaneously have community transmission problems but we also have a lot more testing. If you get more positive tests, some of that is because you have more positive confirmation of the disease, but some is because you are doing more testing. There are some things that might be mildly good news, but Gottlieb, who has been talking today—former FDA Commissioner—has been talking about some really bad news, which as we talked about, this disease is particularly bad for people over 60, but there have been a lot of hopeful signs, besides our love of neighbor obligations not to be transmitting the disease to our grandmas and to our parents and to the elderly, among others, but it looks like among 45- to 54-year-olds, the death rate does look to be—we don't know, but on some preliminary data, it looks to be between five-tenths and seven-tenths of 1 percent compared to flu at

one-tenth of 1 percent across the whole population. That would be a stunningly high case death rate among the 45- to 54-year-olds.

Do you know what none of those people care about right now? They care about it, but they don't think that we should be legislating on it without any long debate. None of them are talking about airline emissions between the years 2035 and 2050. NANCY PELOSI shouldn't be talking about it either.

Page 911. I will stop soon. I see one of my colleagues waiting to talk. Page 911, line 3:

SEC. 404. MODIFICATION OF SPECIAL RULES FOR MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER PLANS.

Do you want to know what is going to stop the public health crisis? We should talk about the business model of local newspapers right now rather than get the American people the relief they need.

(a) AMENDMENT TO THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986.—Subsection (m) of section 430 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by the Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act of 2019, is amended to read as follows:

(m) SPECIAL RULES FOR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER PLANS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible newspaper plan sponsor of a plan under which no participant has had the participant's accrued benefit increased (whether because of service or compensation) after April 2, 2019, may elect to have the alternative standards described in paragraph (4) apply to such plan.

(2) ELIGIBLE NEWSPAPER PLAN SPONSOR.—The term 'eligible newspaper plan sponsor' here means—

And then there are like four or five different definitions of what an eligible newspaper plan sponsor would mean.

If the American people wonder why Congress hasn't passed a coronavirus emergency health and emergency economics relief plan, I think it would be great if Speaker PELOSI went out and stood before a gaggle of reporters before the cameras and started talking about the newspaper sponsor alternative plan definition provisions of her bid in this negotiation on page 911, subsection (b).

One more for now. On page 931:

TITLE V—REHABILITATION FOR MULTIPLE EMPLOYER PENSIONS

Line 16:

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Department of Treasury an agency to be known as the "Pension Rehabilitation Administration".

By the way, there is no such thing. This doesn't exist. It is being created of whole cloth here. So in the middle of a national health pandemic emergency, we are creating new bureaucracies to deal with insolvent pensions.

(1) ESTABLISHMENT OF POSITION.—There shall be a head of the Pension Rehabilitation Administration a Director, who shall be appointed by the President.

(2) TERM.—In General, the term of Director shall last 5 years.

I am going to stop. This is wrong. This ought not to be happening. It is not being done in good faith. Basically,

none of this stuff is really going to be considered in any negotiation. It is a guise and a rouse to try to move the goalpost.

When people play nine innings of a baseball game in a negotiation and somebody decided to use a whole bunch of their pitchers, then the decision was made, hey, let's add five more innings to the baseball game—the American people are waiting for this relief act, and it has gone on for another 36 hours here for no reason that is honorable and sincere. There are a whole bunch of big and real debates that could be had inside the four corners of the four, kind of five task forces that helped write this piece of legislation. There are lots of reasonable debates to be had inside that. Throwing in a laundry list of Christmas list lighting is why this place bleeds public trust.

The Democratic whip in the House said it explicitly: “A tremendous opportunity exists [in this crisis] to restructure things here to fit our vision.” None of these things—none of these 1,119 pages are about solving the crisis, none of the nine paragraphs that I decided to read, beat the virus, none of these things keeps small business alive.

I get it. Expenses. Speaker PELOSI is a liberal progressive from San Francisco. I am a conservative from Nebraska. We have a different political philosophy. That is fine. It is completely reasonable for us to debate politics and policy and ideology when we are not in the middle of a crisis.

Speaker PELOSI could bring her liberal wish list to the House floor for a vote any time she wants. Unlike most of us, she controls an agenda, but she ought to have the decency to vote on her ideologically driven wish list after this emergency legislation has been passed.

We are better than this. This is not the way to restore the public trust. We should do better.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I know we are talking about the unprecedented times that we are facing in our Nation, but I want to talk about something that we have in common, something that is pretty remarkable and that I think we all need to remember that we have in common. We represent incredible people, the American people, who are doing so much right now—in Alaska, in Colorado, in Nebraska, in Montana, and in Connecticut—to help each other so much.

I frequently tell my constituents, as we are talking about getting through this crisis, that everyone has a role to play—young, old, business leaders, elected leaders, union members—and everybody is playing a role. So I am very proud of my constituents in Alaska, and I know that everybody in this body is proud of what their constituents are doing right now, the best of our Nation is doing right now.

We talk a lot about how we are teleworking. I would like to remind folks

that there are some Americans, a lot of Alaskans—thousands, millions—who can't telework. Our healthcare professionals who are on the frontlines, our first responders, our truckdrivers, port workers, Alaskans who are stocking the grocery store shelves, picking up our refuse, parents who are teaching their children at home, local restaurants who are working day and night to continue to provide takeout food—so many people are doing such good work.

There is an incredible outpouring of generosity from all of our citizens, all Americans, and we are hearing about it, from our small businesses donating their time and services to help people in their communities, to volunteers, and to our nonprofits. That is what Alaskans are doing, and that is what Americans are doing around the country at this very moment, despite this enormous adversity and the challenges we are facing—one of the most unprecedented challenges in our history.

These are extraordinary and precarious times right now. People are obviously concerned about their health. People are obviously concerned about their economic health, their jobs, losing jobs, retirement accounts, life savings. People are being told to stay at home. They are hard-working Americans, Alaskans who have worked their whole lives, who don't even know how they are going to pay for their groceries or rent. And they are taking these actions at a difficult time because local and State governments all across the country are making tough decisions, working with their communities to help make sure that the collective whole of our societies, whether in Anchorage or Fairbanks or other places in America, are going to get through this health crisis. The bottom line is that they are coming together in a shared sacrifice.

I am so proud of the people I represent, and I know my colleagues on both sides of the aisle are as well. It is something we have in common.

There was an article in the Washington Post just the other day, like 2 days ago. It said something like, you know, America has gotten through a lot of challenges before: World War II, the Civil War. But this article went on to say: But perhaps the American people don't really have the mettle or the resiliency to get through this one.

That was kind of the gist of this article—classic, clueless, inside-the-beltway reporting—that we are not the same America that got through other challenges; that we don't have the mettle. Well, I would suggest that these Washington Post reporters need to get out of DC. Maybe they should go to Alaska. Maybe they should go somewhere else in America. Come to my State. I guarantee you, we have the mettle—Alaskans and other great Americans—to get through this crisis.

I always say that my constituents are some of the most resilient people in the world. Let me just give you a cou-

ple of examples. Our Alaskan Native communities have been thriving for thousands of years in some of the harshest conditions anywhere on the planet. We are a State full of the ancestors of rugged pioneers who came to Alaska looking for promise and stayed to build a great State.

Throughout our history in my State, we have had extreme challenges before. Earthquakes have flattened our buildings. Tsunamis have wiped out cities. Floods have swept away our homes and entire communities. Wildfires have singed our cities. Volcanic eruptions have dimmed the Sun. The price of oil and the market have dropped before, as we are seeing now. And now we have another unprecedented challenge, a pandemic facing my beloved State and my beloved country.

As I mentioned, we have a lot in common here, and I think a lot of us—all of us—take pride in what our constituents, our fellow Americans, are doing to come together to fight this. And we will fight it. We will emerge stronger and more resilient, and those Washington Post reporters who doubted the will of Americans, maybe in a couple of years, will be writing a story about how wrong they were.

Until about a day ago, I was actually proud of the work of this body in responding to this crisis. For the past 3 weeks, we have come together, putting together bold, bipartisan pieces of legislation to address this pandemic in a quick amount of time. There is what we are calling phase 1 just 2 weeks ago, where Congress passed an \$8.3-billion package—I will not go into all of the details—to address the healthcare needs that we are starting to see with the spread of this pandemic. That was phase 1.

Phase 2—just last week, again, Members of this body came together. It wasn't a perfect bill, that is for sure, that came over from the House that provided Federal funds so that individuals exposed to the virus could get healthy and so that our hospitals have more resources to combat this health crisis. The President passed it the day we passed it here in the Senate. That was just last week.

It was bold, bipartisan work. For example, this legislation expanded emergency food assistance, including for children who rely on free and reduced lunch, lunches from school cafeterias where they could no longer access those meals because schools are closing, new paid sick leave—100-percent dollar for dollar—that would be paid and reimbursed by the Federal Government. So we acted. We acted.

These weren't perfect pieces of legislation. I didn't like every provision in them, but we got together—Democrats and Republicans—and we acted quickly and boldly. And that is what our constituents want us to do.

But we knew we had to do much, much more—much, much more—because every day, there is a new development we are seeing, not just on the health side but on the economic side.

So what did we do? Last week, everybody here rolled up their sleeves and worked around the clock. Again, I was proud of the work that we started on. By the way, this was bipartisan work.

I was talking to Democratic Senators all weekend. When you listen to the chairman of the Finance Committee, he talked about the task force that we had—Democrats and Republicans—putting together legislation—big, bold legislation—coming together like we had on phase 1 and phase 2 to really focus in on four key areas: putting cash directly in the hands of hurting families in Alaska and throughout the country, delivering rapid relief to the small businesses that are being crushed by this pandemic and laying off their workers, stabilizing key industries to avoid massive layoffs that are now very quickly coming on the horizon and starting to happen in America, and sending new resources to medical professionals who are on the frontlines. Those were our goals, and we needed to do it in a big way.

We completed this, the Senate—Republicans and Democrats—in less than a week. Why? Because all of us knew the people we represent were hurting and are hurting. They need hope, and they are looking to us for that hope.

Again, it wasn't perfect. This bill isn't perfect, but it is pretty remarkable work to do in less than a week. This bill represents a huge and massive effort to help the people we represent.

Now, a lot of my colleagues have been coming down on the floor talking about what this bill will do for the people we represent. I am not going to go into all of the details, but let me just name a few because some of them were ideas from our Democratic colleagues. Where we had certain amounts in the bill, they came and said: No, we want more.

We said: OK, all right, we will work with you, just like we did on phase 1 and phase 2.

I will just mention a few. I have been talking to a lot of the elected leaders throughout my State, making a lot of calls and asking: What do you need? What is happening? How can we help? I had a phone conversation just a few days ago with the mayor of Anchorage. That is my hometown. Everybody is working hard. The mayor is. The Governor is doing a good job, a really good job, and his team. We are all working together. The mayor is a Democrat. The Governor is a Republican. I am reaching out to everybody. It doesn't matter the party at this moment, that is for darn sure.

What did the mayor say to me? He said: The priority has to be that people need cash, Senator, to pay the rent, to buy food, and to make their car payment. There is so much uncertainty.

Can we do that? Yes, we can do that. We did it. It is in the bill. There is \$2,400 per couple and \$500 per additional child. That is going to help. That is going to help families who need cash. That is one thing.

Another thing is we had a massive increase to the unemployment insurance program, a quarter of \$1 trillion—\$250 billion. Why? Because we are seeing massive layoffs.

Now, I am going to give credit to my colleagues. A couple of Democratic colleagues, friends of mine, are on the floor right now. This was a big idea that they wanted to push. It is big number. It is a big number—a quarter of a trillion dollars. This is going to significantly expand the number of individuals who are eligible to receive benefits. This is really important for my State, particularly the self-employed—the fishermen, who have never been covered under the UI programs in the past.

And, once more, the bill provides a flat increase in benefits, \$600 per week to all State programs in the next few months. So workers who are forced to file unemployment—unfortunately, we are seeing hundreds of thousands across the country—have the financial security to pay their bills and stay afloat. So this is another big element of this bill.

Let me provide one more that I think is one of the most important. And I think there is really strong bipartisan agreement on this one. I know it because I talk to my friends who are Democrats. It is a small business rescue package and relief package of about \$350 billion to enable small businesses to access credit and have the liquidity to stay afloat and weather this storm, not creating a new bureaucracy but an expansion of the Small Business Administration's 7(a) loan program so you can do it through local banks in your State. The idea here is to make sure the worker and the employers of our small businesses stay connected.

Small businesses can take out a loan of up to \$10 million under this program, and if they use that loan to pay for payroll and rent and other fixed costs, this loan is going to be completely forgiven.

Whenever I describe this to my fellow Alaskans, they say: This is exactly the kind of thing we need, Senator, right now, as businesses are closing.

So that is in. That is in the bill—cash in the hands of small businesses so they can keep workers employed and be ready to get back up and grow and prosper again when we get through this pandemic. That is in the bill. Everybody agrees with that.

Finally, another element—and I am just describing some of the elements, but I wanted to highlight some of these things—is getting more resources to the men and women on the frontlines of this pandemic who are, every day, out there in the healthcare industry trying to keep Americans and Alaskans healthy and alive.

How much? There is a lot in it, but the number is \$100 billion for hospitals, for healthcare providers. Let me say that again: \$100 billion.

The minority leader was on the floor the other day. I was kind of stunned

when he said something along the lines of this partisan bill—and, by the way, it is not partisan, OK; this was written by Republicans and Democrats, and a lot of these ideas are from both sides—doesn't do anything to help hospitals. We need a Marshall Plan to help them.

Well, I think \$100 billion is a pretty good start. That is in the bill.

So, as I mentioned, I have been proud of the work of this body. I have been proud of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. No one has wisdom on how to fix all this. No one knows what is coming in the future. But I think all of us know that we need to act, and we need to act boldly, and we need to act in a bipartisan way. And we did it. We did it, again, in less than a week.

It is not a perfect bill—that is for sure—but it is going to provide help to my fellow Alaskans, to Americans. It is massive. It is bold. It is bipartisan. It is timely. And, as of yesterday, I thought we were going to get another bill out to the American people quickly. Hope—that is what they need. Yes, the Senate is working.

Then, for whatever reason—and I am not going to point fingers—the wheels started to come off on this one, the one that we really need. And the bill has been filibustered. That means we can't even get on the floor to debate it. We can't start debating it.

Now, look, I have been listening to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. There has been a lot of anger on this floor, a lot of back-and-forth. My good friend from Nebraska just talked about this idea that somehow my colleagues on the other side filibustered this bill that the Senate has been working on to make room for Speaker PELOSI's bill. I really, really, really hope that is not true. I really hope that is not true. I don't think there is one Member of this body, Republican or Democratic, who could defend now what Senator SASSE just read on the floor.

Then there started to be talk about, well, the bill that we had, that we are focused on, is all about bailouts. That is a charged term. But you could talk about the 2008–2009 Tart bill—I wasn't a Member of the Senate then, during the financial crisis—as a bailout. I think that is a good description.

Why was that a bailout? Because you had people on Wall Street taking risky actions that eventually cratered the financial system—by the way, they made a ton of money doing it—and cratered the economy. Then they had to be bailed out because the banks were going to go under, and it was going to ruin the U.S. economy. That is a bailout. That is a classic bailout.

What we are seeing right now is much more like a natural disaster, much more like a war. There is no one to be blamed right now. The airlines shouldn't be blamed for what is happening right now. This is a pandemic. So this term being thrown around of, oh, it is a bailout—what we are trying to do is help the American worker, help the American family.

It is not a perfect bill, but we are dealing with a natural disaster. Something came over from overseas onto our shores, and we are now all trying to deal with it.

I am going to conclude by saying: I am on this side of the aisle. I am a Republican with principled views on certain issues. I certainly have strong views about protecting my State. But I have also tried to work, throughout my time in the Senate, with my colleagues on both sides. Some of my closest friends are my Democratic friends. I am proud of that work. That is how you get things done in this body. Some I have been working with all weekend.

This issue should not be about partisan politics, so my point was not to come down here on the floor and make this a partisan speech. We are facing one of the most unprecedented challenges in the history of the United States of America. We certainly need to move beyond politics. If you looked at what was going on in the Senate until yesterday, that is exactly what we have been doing for the past 3 weeks.

Are there areas of compromise in this bill that hopefully can unlock things? Sure. Two that I have been working on and supporting, again, with my Democratic colleagues, pressing my colleagues on: Could we have more transparency on this Federal facility program? Sure. Absolutely. I would be very supportive of this. Are there ways to help shore up distressed pensions for the great working men and women who build things in America? Yes. But we are running out of time. We are running out of time. We need to pass this bill now. Why do we need to pass this bill now? Because it is going to help the people we represent. It is going to help people in Connecticut and Virginia and Colorado and Montana and Alaska. And they need hope. They need hope right now.

Again, this bill isn't perfect. It has got a lot of hope. Once we pass it, then all of us are going to need to do the hard work of making sure that the implementation of this bill goes as effectively and as smoothly as possible. Then, when we see mistakes in it, which there will be, we need to come back here and act to correct this. That is what we need to do.

These are exceptional times for our country. We had an influenza outbreak in 1918 that ravaged the world, and it particularly ravaged my State. As Senator MURKOWSKI said earlier today, one of the things that has got a lot of us troubled in Alaska is, 100 years ago when the influenza came through, it did finally get to some of our Alaska Native villages. I have over 200 communities, not connected by roads, with very limited healthcare facilities. During the Spanish influenza, many of these communities were completely wiped out.

It is a scary time—a scary time—but we are going to get through it. We are going to get through it stronger, more

resilient, and the way we are going to do it is if we are all working together, which we had been until about 24 hours ago.

So I think the provisions outlined in this bill, while not perfect, are what the American people are looking for. They can help minimize the damage done by this pandemic. And I certainly hope we come together the way we have been for the last 3 weeks, in a bipartisan way, to get this voted on and passed as quickly as possible because every hour of delay imperils the incredible American people whom we represent.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am pleased to follow my friend and colleague and fellow Marine from Alaska. We are separated by about as far a geographical distance as there can be in this Nation: Alaska and Connecticut. I am also pleased to be followed by a colleague from Colorado who is almost smack in the middle. And we are united despite our geographic differences and despite our political differences.

I want to assure the American people that the contention they have seen on this floor in no way reflects the reality of our hope and desire to move quickly and to move big to address this unprecedented, historic crisis—a healthcare emergency and an economic emergency in this country.

The reality is that right now, less than 25 yards from us, the minority leader, the Democratic leader, CHUCK SCHUMER; and perhaps the Secretary of the Treasury or his representatives; and also representatives of the White House are literally working on a better bill, a bill that better protects workers.

Workers and families should come first, not corporate interests. Small businesses should be a priority. They are the economic backbone and major employer in our country.

It will be a better and a bigger bill in addressing the medical surge that this country must confront: the imminent soaring of numbers of cases; the potentially fatal infections that are about to deluge our hospitals and healthcare facilities; and the need for ventilators, masks, tests, gowns, all kinds of equipment that will help to save lives.

I think all of us could do well by listening to the American people about the need for a bigger, better, bolder bill.

I have been inspired by how resolute and resilient the people of Connecticut have been. Over the last 2 or 3 weeks, I have talked to them around the State of Connecticut before we were restricted in our meetings, and then by talks on the telephone, by teleconferences, and conversations.

I have spoken within the last few days to the Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce and small businesses that they assembled and large ones, the Northwestern Chamber of Commerce,

meetings of small businesses from the Hartford area, the Federally Qualified Health Centers of Connecticut, hospital executives, doctors, and professionals who are dealing with this crisis now on the frontlines, and, of course, local officials.

Just today, I spoke with the South Central Council of Governments, with mayors and local officials from up and down the coast of Connecticut, great nonprofits like Americare and food banks like Food Share.

What they are telling me is do it urgently, do it big, but do it right. We need to do it quickly, but we need to get it right. That is why this additional time is absolutely the right thing when we are talking about almost \$2 trillion in taxpayer money and a crisis that demands careful and deliberate thought.

I was a critic of the last bailout because it insufficiently protected workers and consumers. We know that we can do better than they did then, and we will because we are putting workers first.

What I have heard, in listening to the people of Connecticut, talking to small businesses who are fearful about closing their doors and going broke, workers who are scared about losing their jobs, and nonprofits who are frightened about failing in their missions for lack of resources—they are hurting and are fearful about being crushed by this healthcare and economic crisis.

That is why we need to work together to protect the men and women who own those small and medium-sized businesses with a generous loan and grant program. We should take care of their workers with an expanded unemployment compensation program and guarantee that those small businesses will, in fact, maintain their payrolls.

If we are going to provide money to big industries like the airlines, we must include conditions, strings attached, that put workers first—no layoffs, no salary cuts for workers or salary increases to the corporate executives and no stock buybacks, and treat consumers fairly. That should be the set of principles.

Right now, all across America and in Connecticut, working families are worried about whether they are going to see another paycheck. They are worried about how they are going to pay their rent and utility bills, put food on the table, clothe their children. Small businesses are watching years of hard work—years of risk-taking and entrepreneurial energy—potentially teeter on the brink of absolute collapse. We face calamity and catastrophe—not the fault of any of them or workers or large or small executives, but we must respond to the magnitude of this moment.

I spoke on a radio program this morning, Chaz and AJ on WPLR, and I was asked: Will it be bipartisan? Can you be bipartisan? The answer is, clearly, yes. We have been on two relief packages, and we will be on this one, as

early as tomorrow or the next day because no partisan plan will pass as a creation of one party or another.

Storefronts and inventory lists aren't the backbone of our economy; it is the millions of men and women who go to work every day and, even tomorrow, will do their job, even in the face of the uncertainty and the fear that they confront. Doing right by our economy means doing right by them—the working families of America.

There is much the President could do if he uses, for example, the Defense Production Act or similar kinds of power that, so far, he has resisted invoking. He could provide the medical tools we will need to confront the coming crisis by taking advantage of the offers he has received from GM and other major companies to produce the ventilators or the private protective gear that will help to save lives.

There is much that we all must do in continuing to observe the restrictions that will help save lives—not only restrictions physically in our homes but also the perspective we must have that we are in for a long fight against this invisible foe. And it will be much longer than 15 days. It will be a matter of months, not weeks, and we must have the resilience and resoluteness that I have heard from the people of Connecticut in their voices as I have spoken to them.

We live in no ordinary time, as Eleanor Roosevelt said about her era. We must muster the same kind of determination, grit, and courage to face it.

I know there is that transcendent sense of urgency to do it quickly and to do it right and a shared sense of purpose that ultimately will get us to the other side of this crisis. We will be better and stronger and a bigger nation, not only in our economy; we will be a bigger nation because we have come together in meeting this crisis.

Shared sacrifice must mean truly sharing the benefits with workers, with families, and with small businesses that will ultimately help us to save our Nation and our economy. My hope is that we will do it quickly, but we will do it right.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I would like to thank my colleague from Connecticut for his remarks tonight and for the hopefulness that he has expressed. I have been here now for 11 years, and I can't predict success here, and I can't say it is assured, but I think it is very likely that we are going to come together in a deal. I hope we come together in that deal today, and I think the American people are going to be able to assess the progress that has been made for workers as a result of taking a little bit of extra time, for hospitals as a result of a little extra time, for State and local governments that are going to benefit mightily because of the work we have done.

I rise tonight not to get into this back-and-forth about this because I think we are going to address it, and I think we are going to address it in a way that is meaningful and in a way that is bipartisan and in a way that can help give the American people a measure of confidence that we are doing our job. For those of you who have heard me over the years on this floor, I don't always come here with a report that optimistic. But tonight, given everything I have heard over the course of the day, I want to say that this is a serious problem. It is an unprecedented challenge. We have to rise to this challenge together, and I believe that when the votes are counted on this bill, it will have been a better bill for the work that has been done, and the vote will be a big bipartisan vote, which will be a shot in the arm for the country and for the American people.

I want to talk not about this back-and-forth, but I want to talk about something that is confronting us; that is, the worst pandemic in a century. Just a month ago, just 30 days ago, nobody here would have imagined—30 days ago we had 30 confirmed cases in the United States. Today, there are over 41,000 cases, the most anywhere outside of China and Italy.

The President is right. He goes out and says that there are 140-some countries that have this. That is true. We are in the top three of those countries. There are 379 Americans who have died as we are here tonight. In the middle of the worst public health crisis in a century, our medical community doesn't have the basic supplies and equipment they need to respond.

This matters because if we don't get our doctors and nurses protective gear, they are going to get sick. If they get sick, they can't help everyone else who is sick. That is a huge problem, and our medical professionals in Colorado, as in the Commonwealth of Virginia and all across this great country, have been begging for us to pay attention to this for months—for months.

The chief medical officer at Denver Health—which is our fabulous public hospital in Denver, one of the leading hospitals in this country—says that they do not have enough tests or swabs to keep pace, and the turnaround time for tests is taking much too long. “Our ICU right now is full of patients awaiting test results,” she said. “We need faster testing.” Hopefully that is coming, but it has been a long time getting here. And every single healthcare worker who is tested in this country but does not get a result for 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 days—even if they don't have the coronavirus—can't go back to work.

As a result of that, we face a severe shortage of healthcare workers in this country. At Denver Health, they say: “We are burning through our personal protective equipment to the point that we are on short supply, as is every other health care institution in Denver and likely in Colorado.”

If this continues, she said they are going to have to put two patients on a single ventilator. That is not how it is supposed to work.

In Colorado, our nurses are sewing masks because they don't have masks. My wife was sewing a mask at our home in Denver yesterday—in the United States, in the 21st century.

We have doctors who are getting just a single mask and being told to use it indefinitely. I was on the phone this evening with doctors and administrators from our hospitals who are telling me that they are having to ration swabs for tests. It is a two-swab test, but they are only using one swab because they don't have enough swabs to do it properly. There are doctors who are having to use the same mask patient after patient when the mask is designed for it to be only one patient; that is the way it is supposed to work. They are violating protocols of the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control because they are rationing equipment. There is no excuse in this country—the richest country—that they should be rationing in this public healthcare crisis. Gowns, masks, shields, clothes—America's healthcare workers don't have any of it. And do you know what they spent today doing? They spent today scrolling through ads—not all of them, not the ones with patients, but the ones who have to equip our medical professionals. They were scrolling through ad after ad after ad—from where? China—saying that their masks are for sale in China. They have no idea whether these are fly-by-night organizations.

These companies are requiring Denver Health and other hospitals to put the money upfront and say: You will get the masks 3 or 4 weeks from now. They don't even know whether those masks will come. They don't know what the quality of those masks will be. We were told yesterday by the President that China was sending us masks, and now all of those seem to be being sent to Italy.

I saw a quote from a doctor in California who said it is like “We are at war with no ammo.” That is not their fault. That is not their fault. They are on the frontlines of this war. We should be ashamed. We should be ashamed. I am.

The question is, How are we going to make sure our medical community has the supplies and equipment they need? Perhaps it would be useful to be honest about where we are, to start with.

The Department of Health and Human Services estimates that we are going to need 3.5 billion masks to fight this pandemic this year. When you hear me tonight use the word “mask,” in your own mind add the word “gown,” add the word “glove,” add the word “shield” because they need all of that—3.5 billion masks to fight this pandemic this year. The administration came with their first supplemental requesting \$1.8 billion; today we are at

\$2 trillion in just the last month. They came and said 1.8 billion. We said we need 350 million masks. We need 3.5 billion masks—billion masks—this year. Today in America, we have exactly 35 million masks. That is 1 percent of what we need—not 80 percent but 1 percent of what we need.

Nationwide tonight, our hospitals have 160,000 ventilators among all the hospitals we have in the greatest country in the world. Johns Hopkins estimates that we are going to need another 40,000 ventilators by the time this is done.

In Colorado tonight, I heard—this might be of interest to the other Senators who are here tonight because New York represents half of the cases in this country right now. The concern from Colorado, and I am sure from your States as well, is that all those ventilators are going to go to New York, as they should right now because that is where the greatest need is. What is going to be left for the rest of us? What is going to be left for the rest of us in 7 days or 10 days or 20 days?

How can we be this foolish? How can we be this blind? The administration hasn't taken this crisis seriously enough from the beginning.

When it comes to the equipment that people on the frontline need—the “ammunition,” to use their word, that the people on the frontline need—they are being ignored or dismissed with a bunch of happy talk about how we are going to solve this problem—if we can even admit that there is a problem. The result is something I never thought I would see in the United States of America, the country I grew up in. States like New York and New Jersey are literally being forced to outbid—States like New York are being forced to outbid New Jersey and California to secure critical supplies while they are fighting through the worst public health crisis in a century.

Yesterday, during his press conference in the White House, the President said: We want them to be on that open market because we might lose money if we are not on that open market.

Exactly the opposite of what he thinks is happening, is happening. Governors like Andrew Cuomo are being forced to pay \$7 for surgical masks that just a week ago cost 85 cents. My doctors in Colorado told me tonight that stuff yesterday that was five times the cost of what it ordinarily is, today is seven times the cost of what it ordinarily is. In Colorado, our children's hospital is paying 70 cents a mask. That is 10 times what they were spending a month ago. Ventilators that used to cost a few thousand dollars now cost up to \$40,000 because the President won't act. He will not provide the national leadership that we need.

Ten days ago, when talking about the test, he said: “I don't take any responsibility at all.” That is what he said. He may think that he doesn't have the blame for everything that has gone

wrong—and I am sure he doesn't—but he does have a very profound responsibility now that only Presidents of the United States have.

When Governors from across the country raised the supply shortages with him last week, he told them to “get it yourself.” He told them that the Federal Government is not “a shipping clerk.”

He said:

The governors, locally, are going to be in command. We will be following them, and we hope they can do the job. . . . We are there to back you up should you fail.

We are failing, Mr. President. We are failing to address the seriousness of the public health crisis this country is facing. And we are going to rue the day that we said it was the hospitals' problem to solve, that it was the Governors' problem to solve, that it was the States' problem to solve.

I want to say this to the American people tonight because it is really important that you know what the facts are. It is important for you to know that we don't need tens of thousands of masks or millions of masks. We need billions of masks and all the other equipment that I talked about earlier—gowns, shields, swabs, the elements of tests, the reagents that are necessary to take those tests. When I say “we,” I am talking about the healthcare professionals we are relying on to be the frontline in this effort.

What is the President's response to this? He has touted about the shipments coming out of our national stockpile. I am coming to think this national stockpile must be more like a really small national warehouse.

Colorado received that shipment yesterday. We are grateful for it. We are grateful for the shipment we got from the national stockpile. I want my colleagues to hear me. The Department of Public Health in Colorado estimates that those supplies will last for a single day of statewide operation—1 day.

Then the President comes out and talks about the tens of thousands of masks that are going to New York or California, as if that can make the difference. It won't make a difference when you need millions of masks.

Then, at the press conference yesterday, he suggested that the new commitments by private businesses will somehow be enough. He said: The numbers are quite large, and we have tremendous numbers of companies making equipment. We have respirators. We have ventilators. We have a lot of things happening right now. We have millions of masks that are coming.

Millions of masks, not billions.

They will be here soon, he said. They will be shipped directly to the States.

He failed to mention that soon actually means 18 months from now. That is not going to help us. We don't have 18 months. It is literally life and death.

It is for all of these reasons that we ask the President to invoke his authorities under the Defense Production Act, which gives him and him alone the

ability to mobilize private industry so we can ramp up production in a coordinated and coherent way, so we can have a national approach to fixing this broken supply chain, to fixing the empty storerooms, and to putting these critical supplies and equipment on the frontline.

I was so pleased that he invoked those authorities 5 days ago, but instead of using them, he has equivocated. He said things like we have the act to use “just in case we need it. But we have so many things being made. . . .” He didn't finish the sentence, but he meant this voluntary effort—which I deeply appreciate, by the way. Don't get me wrong. Every single mask and every single gown and every single shield that can be manufactured and every single respirator that can be manufactured and lent to the people on the lines—that is important, but it is not going to solve this crisis. It is not going to keep us in a position where we can actually flatten the curve.

He said yesterday: “We're a country not based on nationalizing our businesses. Call a person over in Venezuela, ask them how did nationalization for their businesses work out?”

As every Senator here knows, the Defense Production Act doesn't nationalize businesses. It is our tool. It is a mechanism to create a coherent strategy for our public sector and our private sector to produce goods based on an urgent national need. The government pays market value for those goods and has a strategy for how those goods will be distributed around the country as the epidemic moves from place to place.

It is unacceptable that we are in a situation where States are having to bid against each other, where the hospitals in Colorado are having to bid against each other. They said to me tonight: Michael, if you could just get us 5 million masks and send them to Colorado, we can distribute them. But it makes no sense for us to be looking up the yellow pages in China to buy masks.

I said to them: I wish that were enough. I wish that would be enough. But as long as Colorado is going to have to compete with New York, which is going to have to compete with New Jersey or compete with Florida or compete with Texas, it won't work.

It is not just the price, although that is shocking. The fact that there are people gouging at a moment like this is appalling. It is not just the price; it is the availability. The nurses and doctors in Denver, CO, or in any city in this country tonight should not be using one swab for a test. It takes two. They should not be wearing one mask all day long—a mask that is designed to be worn with just one patient.

The President said yesterday that he looked into this as a businessman. He was shocked at all the masks being thrown away. We ought to be able to sterilize the masks.

There are important reasons why we have those rules—to protect our

healthcare workers and so we don't spread disease.

By the way, I asked: Does it solve your problem that the President has said we can use construction masks now in our healthcare facilities?

They said: We are grateful for the additional masks that we are getting, but it is not remotely helping fix the scale of the problem, and a lot of these masks actually aren't appropriate in a healthcare setting.

They will do anything. They are not looking down their noses at it. I had somebody say to me today—one of the people on the call said that they had gotten masks from a finger nail salon and that they had no idea what quality the masks were. There was Asian writing on the outside of the package. They don't know what it is, but those masks will be there when they run out of all the other masks. That is what they are going to use. That is what we are using in the United States of America tonight? That is what we are telling the people we are asking to save our lives, to save our parents' lives? That is what we are saying?

I am sure the other Senators have had the same experience that I have had, which is I have been in touch with companies all over my State that stand ready to help produce supplies and equipment.

The President said yesterday that one of the problems he had or one of the challenges he had was, you wouldn't have any idea where to begin. I don't know who makes ventilators. Maybe they made them a long time ago and they have forgotten how to do it. Surely he doesn't believe that we couldn't figure that out in a split second, where the manufacturing capacity is in this country to do what needs to be done. Yet these companies have said to me that nobody in the administration has been in touch to tell them what to make, how much to make, or where it should go.

I say thank you to my colleagues for their indulgence, but the truth is—and the truth needs to be understood—that I think this is a moment in time when we have to get this done, but we are getting it so wrong. The truth is, as much as we welcome all of the citizens and businesses that are stepping up on their own, it will not be enough.

Hanes can't produce 3.5 billion masks. It is a great company. As the President said yesterday, it is involved in cotton products, but it can't make 3.5 billion masks, and it can't do it in the time we need it done. GM and Tesla can't manufacture 40,000 ventilators. As for the 2 million masks the Vice President trumpeted yesterday from Apple, we appreciate it, but it is an infinitesimal amount. It sounds like a big number. That is why the President actually said yesterday that the reason he came out and read those big numbers was so that you would know they were sending out lots of stuff. He said that, and I think that gives a complete misimpression that, somehow, this is

being handled or that we have it together.

We are one nation under God for a reason, and that is to respond to a challenge just like this one. It cannot be one hospital at a time, one State at a time, or one business at a time. That will not work. It is not a strategy. In fact, it is making matters worse because not only are we not fixing the supply chain, but the pricing is getting completely distorted, and people are competing with an incredibly scarce number of goods.

This is not a substitute for a coherent national strategy to figure out how we are going to meet these critical supply and equipment shortages across the country, and every single day, it gets worse. You can hear the panic in the Governors and in the people who are working in our hospitals and in the people who are working with people who are having to go into unsafe conditions, who are willing to do it. They are on the frontline of this war with no ammunition.

As much as the President may not want to make these hard decisions, for whatever reason—because he hopes for the best; because maybe the medical thing will work itself out; because maybe, instead of 18 months, it will be shorter for a vaccine; because maybe the hot weather will make things better—he is literally the only one with the authority to call America to this challenge. The President is portraying himself as a wartime President, but he is leaving it up to Hanes to plan D-day. It will not work. He needs to give the frontline of this war the ammunition it needs, and he is the only one who can do it. No one else can do it. This Senate can't do it.

There has been a lot of back-and-forth today about a brief delay in passing this economic package. As I said, I hope very much it will pass. I hope very much we will have a deal soon. I hope very much it will be bipartisan. We should do our work, and we should get that done. Yet I beg of you—I beg of you, my colleagues in the U.S. Senate—for every Member of this body to call on the White House and ask why, after weeks, there is still no plan to make sure our doctors and nurses have the gear to protect themselves; why our hospitals still don't have the ventilators they need to treat people; why it is not obvious where those ventilators are going to come from; and why we still don't have a clear strategy from this administration to arm the frontline that is waging this war while we are here tonight.

This is, perhaps, the greatest challenge our country has faced since the Second World War. It probably is, and it is scary. We have risen to challenges before, and I think we can rise to this one. I may not have voted for the President, and I may not agree with much of what he does, but I urge him to act. I urge him to use the authority that is granted to him uniquely in America. Out of 330 million Americans,

only the President of the United States has that authority. He won that election. He has that authority. We can't do it without him. Lives are literally at stake in Colorado and across the country.

We need him to lead, and I beg of all the Members of this Chamber to do whatever they can, if they have influence on him, to get him to understand the gravity of the situation we are facing—the scope that we are facing—and the lack of preparedness that needs to be addressed by his invoking his authority under that statute.

I thank my colleagues for their patience and their indulgence.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for his impassioned words that were right on the money.

The Senate is going to adjourn shortly, but that doesn't mean negotiations are slowing down one bit. Secretary Mnuchin just left my office. We have had some very good discussions, and, in fact, the list of outstanding issues has narrowed significantly. We are going to work on into the night.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. Kaine. Mr. President, I had not intended to speak today. Yet, in my office, as I was alternately talking to Virginians and colleagues about our goal to find an economic package that will backstop workers and the American economy, I had the TV on. I was watching what was happening on the floor, and I decided I would come and just speak for a few minutes.

Frankly, I think that what has been happening on the floor today has sort of been artificial and hasn't really shown the American public what is truly going on. There were a lot of speeches that were taking place wherein it was sort of a blame game, and I don't think that is what Americans wanted to see today. Just as there was yesterday, there was another vote today that failed, a vote that was destined to fail. I don't think that is what Americans deserved to see today. What Americans didn't see yesterday and today is the intense dialogue and debate and discussion around the third coronavirus response bill—by far, the largest.

It is important to get the details right. We spent time getting the details right, in a bipartisan way, to pass an \$8 billion supplemental appropriation just 2 weeks ago. We spent time getting the details right to pass an extension of paid childcare and unemployment insurance that had a cost of about \$100 billion. We are now talking about an economic stimulus package that could be as high as \$2 trillion. The American public wants us to get the details right.

As I look at the stimulus discussions, there are sort of five pillars, and this is

the way I describe it to Virginians. It is the workers and their families; it is small business; it is the large business and industry sectors; it is State and local governments; and it is our healthcare network.

As for the workers, we are all hearing from people in our States who are so significantly affected. They are without salaries and wages. How are they going to pay their rents or their mortgages? They are in danger of eviction and foreclosure. How are they going to pay childcare and other expenses? This has to be the heart of this bill. I think the White House accepts that and that we should too.

This package has to be right for working people, and the details matter. Only about 26 percent of American workers are covered by the unemployment insurance system. We can't just rely on that old system if we really want to backstop all of the people who have lost income and be able to protect them and their families.

I saw, over the week, that the Government of the United Kingdom decided to just make a guarantee to all working people that they will backstop you for 80 percent of your lost earnings during the time period of this national emergency. We should hold ourselves to that standard and try to provide a package that backstops workers and their families, those who are of low and middle income. That is pillar 1.

Pillar 2 is small businesses, and I think there is huge agreement on this. Small businesses are the engine of the American economy, the employer of first resort for Americans. Yet those small businesses—including nonprofits, cultural, and service organizations—have significant challenges, and we need to get them through this tough time. If we get them through the tough time, primarily with loans and then if we come out of this public health challenge into a challenged economy and they just have more debt on their books, we are not really going to help them. So the small business pillar of this is very important in order to get them through this challenging time and to do it in a way that does not just saddle these small businesses with more debt.

The third is the large business and industry sectors. Of course, we need to provide protection for them. That is not the issue. Frankly, the issue is not even, really, the amount of the protection that must be provided. It must be significant. However, we learned through the stimulus package in 2009 and through the tax bill in 2017 that dollars given without conditions to many of the large businesses can be spent in very economically unproductive ways, so it is important to get those details right. There are limits on using these Federal funds for executive compensation. There are limits on using the funds for stock buybacks. We can get the details right so that the dollars that are provided to our large industry sectors and businesses are used to protect their employees.

As for States and local governments, we are all on the phone with our Governors and with our mayors and with county health officials. We have all watched them close down school systems, close down universities, deal with extra healthcare challenges, and deal with skyrocketing unemployment insurance applications in every jurisdiction in the country. We should provide them with the resources to deal with those challenges.

My hope as a former Governor—and we have other former Governors in the Chamber—is that, when we provide assistance to State and local governments, we will do it in a way with maximum flexibility so they can use those funds in ways they see fit to meet the local needs they have experienced.

The last pillar is the key, important one—I will close here, and this is to continue my colleague from Colorado's passion and plea on behalf of our healthcare industry—which is the appropriate level of resources to our healthcare infrastructure. There won't be any amount of economic stimulus that will work if we don't handle the public health crisis in a very smart way going forward. We could make it \$3 trillion, or we could make it \$4 trillion, but we would be pouring the money away if we were not to get the public health crisis right. If we get it right, that will be the single most important thing toward restarting the economy.

So the last pillar of the five pillars that we are spending time on is in the support for hospitals, community health centers, other health clinics, healthcare professionals, and supporting childcare for them. We have to keep our frontline healthcare workers at work, but many of them have children in schools that have now been closed. We don't want them having to stay home with their kids because there is no childcare when we want them at hospitals and clinics. So part of that fifth pillar has to be to protect these healthcare workers, not only their physical health but their ability to go to work every day.

I believe we are close on the negotiation. I don't like watching stem-winding speeches from the floor, blaming who one thinks is responsible for not being able to pass a vote, when I know, 20 yards away, the White House is sitting down with the Democrats, and we are getting closer and closer and closer to coming up with a package that can gain bipartisan acceptance as it should.

The American public needs action. The American public needs big action.

But if we are going to spend \$2 trillion and we spend it the wrong way, we will regret it for years. If we spend it the right way, we could get through this crisis in a way that will do minimum damage to our economy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina). The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, first let me say thank you to my colleague, the

former Governor of Virginia, the Senator from Virginia now. As a former Governor, we have a real interest in making sure that there is a good, cooperative spirit between the Federal Government and State governments.

But this evening, as we have gone through an entire day—which is rather unusual in the Senate to have one Senator speaking after another with others here—at a time in which we should be exercising separation, as they say, to have had so many colleagues on the floor shows just how seriously the U.S. Senate is taking this issue.

Perhaps the frustration laid out by Members of my conference is that we really want this to move forward as quickly as possible, and we understand that it is very difficult to put together the resources in order to buy those additional pieces of equipment that our friend from Colorado laid out unless we have a long-term plan here in which to also pay for it.

So what I would like to do is to share a little bit of what is in this just in terms of a summary of what is in the proposal right now and that we believe is an appropriate, major step in taking care of funding to respond not just to the medical emergency but also to the economic emergency that we have in front of us right now for men and women who are worried about where they are going to get the next paycheck.

First of all, under the appropriations section, we have \$75 billion for hospitals that is included in the proposal; \$20 billion additional for veterans' health that is included; \$11 billion more for vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics and other preparedness needs.

There is an additional \$4.5 billion for the CDC—the Centers for Disease Control, or CDC. The reason we have put that in there is we want to be ahead of the game when it comes to making sure they have the resources to take care of the emergency needs that we know are showing up right now.

There is also an additional \$1.7 billion to add new medical equipment to the strategic national stockpile. As my colleague from Colorado was suggesting, this is an area where we need to beef it up, and we need to be able to provide that additional equipment. That is included in this bill that, right now, has been here for 2 days.

Also, we understand that at the State level there are other needs as well. There is \$20 billion in here for public transportation emergency relief. There is \$10 billion built into the bill right now for block grants to the States. That is the broadest type of resources that we provide to the States today.

There is an additional \$5 billion to be added to FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund. Remember that FEMA is now at a level 1, which is basically their highest level. They are coordinating now on a 24-hour basis with every single State in the Nation directly, back and forth, to provide an avenue of communication and

logistics so that when parts are found or equipment is found in one area, it can be coordinated to get to an area where it is needed—not so much because we always have all the supplies that we need available right now but because we want the supplies that we do have to get to where they are needed as quickly as possible. That is in operation today.

Now, there are other pieces to this that are also really important. One of the reasons you have seen the frustration on the Republican side of this discussion is that there are men and women right now who don't have a paycheck coming in; they have been laid off through no fault of their own. They are being laid off because of COVID-19 and because their businesses have been asked—or in some cases, directed—to close. And when that happens, we feel an obligation to try to at least allow them the opportunity to make it through the next few months, to get ready for the recovery that we are convinced can happen if we properly manage the emergency before us.

I would like to just go through them briefly so that after an entire day of discussion, there is at least an understanding of what is in the bill today just for men and women who are hurting today.

On a per-person basis, we are offering about \$250 billion in additional resources. For a child, there is \$500 for every child in a family, but that is on top of \$1,200 for a mother and a father. What we are suggesting with that is, it doesn't mean that you have to have made that much. This is a refundable tax credit, and it is available to individuals regardless of if they even made that much or paid taxes on that in the last couple of years.

This is really important because this is an immediate, upfront payment from the Internal Revenue Service, the IRS, back to individuals. And the sooner we pass this legislation, the sooner those dollars can get out to people who, right now, are hurting, and they need this additional assistance at this time, not a month and a half or 2 months from now, but as soon as we can get it to them.

Additionally, we have an unemployment proposal that increases the amount of money that goes into the unemployment funds in the amount of about \$250 billion as well.

How does that break out and what does that mean to an individual? If an individual is on unemployment today, what we are offering, besides what they are getting from the State is, first of all, first dollar coverage with no 1-week wait period. Second of all, we are adding an additional \$600 per week—per week—for the first 9 weeks that they are eligible for.

Now, that doesn't mean that unemployment stops at that point, but there is \$600 additional during that 9-week period of time. This is very important for individuals who have no place else to go and have already been laid off of

work because we have told those businesses that they have to shut down.

Another piece of this product right now I think is an excellent piece, one that not only offers emotional support for men and women who are struggling, but it also shares through small businesses an amount—about \$350 billion—that goes to small businesses, businesses that are under—that are under—500 employees in size. When we define an employee, we are talking about an FTE or full-time equivalent of 40 hours. So if you have two half-times, you have one FTE.

But what we have offered to small businesses in this is a very simple loan and loan forgiveness program for which they can go down to their local lender and apply. The local lender is the person who puts the papers together and so forth, but what it allows them to do is to go down and say: Look, I have just been told that my business is shut down. I don't want to lose my employees. What they can do is borrow the money to continue to pay the payroll and benefits for those individuals they would be laying off otherwise. And if they keep them on for a period of up to 8 weeks, we forgive the loan. It becomes a grant. But the reason for that is if we don't do that, those same individuals are going to be on the unemployment rolls, so why make them go through that emotional distress and why have them in such a position that they may not get the benefits back that the small business is offering today.

We have done something else as well. We have said for that small business owner: We know many of you have mortgages; you have ongoing payments. So we will also let you include your mortgage payments, as well, and your ongoing rent, lights, and so forth. And if you keep open, you can also apply to have that part forgiven, as well, up to a grand total of \$10 million per business. Why? Because we want stability in the marketplace, and we think that is what a lot of employees want.

We would like to have that out this week. That is one of the reasons you see the frustrations and the irritation on the Republican side of the aisle here—because we really thought we were negotiating on these items in good faith with Members of the other side in working groups that had both included in such a fashion that we could move through this fairly quickly. In fact, I think you have heard Members on the other side of the aisle talk about the fact that they are not disagreeing with those things.

There is another part too. There are the larger businesses, over 500 in size. When we have businesses that are bigger than 500 in size, what we have said is: Look, we are not going to give you a grant program. We are not going to be in the position of bailing you out. But what we do want to do is to make liquidity and loans available to you—loans that you can afford.

We are going to ask for some conditions on that, yes, but the idea here is to allow them to survive and to be ready to go back into business.

This seems to be the place where we have the most dissension and disagreement between the two parties because, while we are proposing that they can't use this to buy stock back, I think some of our Democratic colleagues thought we had to strengthen it. Fine. That shouldn't take 2 days to work out. They think we should have some more guidelines. Fine. But that shouldn't take 2 days to work out.

The goal here is to keep as many people employed and to keep those businesses operational so that as we move through this health emergency, those businesses continue to do business in the future.

There is a larger portion in this that we also talk about, which is for the airlines and so forth. We have a frustration, as well, with our Democratic colleagues because of some of the suggestions that have been made. We don't think they should have to remake their board of directors if they are going to get a loan.

We think the airlines are critical—not just to save the airlines but because business relies on airlines and people rely on airlines now to get from one place to another throughout the United States.

We have also included about \$17 billion to take care of those separate industries on which we have national defense-specific issues. We think this has been well thought out.

It doesn't mean that there isn't room for more negotiations, but time is of the essence. As we sit here this evening, more people will die; more people will get sick; more men and women will find themselves wondering where they are going to get their next paycheck. Every single day matters.

So our request to the Members on the other side of the aisle, who have twice now said “No, we don't want to take the first procedural step to get onto the bill,” what we say is: Look, you have to push hard on your leadership to come to a consensus. And, please, this is emergency legislation. This should not be a Christmas tree. It should not be a piece of legislation that, since it needs to pass, we can now put a wish list of other things that one party or the other has been trying to get into law but does not have consensus on. This is where the areas of contention are this evening.

So to the men and women who are out there and are concerned, I can share with you that I think we have a very good plan, one that will come close to \$1.9 trillion dollars in terms of what we are offering. But at the same time, it needs to get out as quickly as possible, and it has to be as simple as possible for those men and women to be able to apply for in an unemployment line or the businesses to apply through a local bank so that they can keep people employed or for that larger business to understand that liquidity is

available to get them through a very difficult time, but it is not going to be a grant; it is going to be a loan.

Finally, there is an area which is important that perhaps can have some additional thought put into it, and that is that not just the hospitals at the local level need our support and our assistance right now because they can't do this by themselves, but we are going to find that State after State is going to be knocking on our door, saying: You shut down businesses in our State. You have told us that we need to in order to quell this emergency, but in doing so, the revenues that were generated because of those business activities we don't have.

So you are going to find State revenues that are down significantly, and they are going to be coming in, and they are going to be visiting. I am convinced that between this package and perhaps the next package we have to also recognize the impact to State governments that provide so many of the services that men and women rely on on a daily basis.

So I would like to thank you for your time, Mr. President. I think this is important, and I think the message that we have to have as responsible individuals, Members of this body in which today we truly did have debate and discussion on the floor—we have to finish this, and we have to do it in such a fashion that it reaches men and women who are counting on us as soon as possible.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 632; that the nominations be confirmed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and agreed to are as follows:

IN THE NAVY

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (Lower Half)

Capt. Bradley J. Andros
Capt. Mark D. Behning
Capt. Putnam H. Browne
Capt. Matthew J. Burns
Capt. Joseph F. Cahill, III
Capt. Brian L. Davies
Capt. Lawrence F. Legree
Capt. Marc J. Miguez
Capt. Carlos A. Sardiello
Capt. Richard E. Seif, Jr.
Capt. Derek A. Trinque
Capt. Dennis Velez

Capt. Darryl L. Walker
Capt. Robert D. Westendorff
Capt. Thomas R. Williams, II

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 238, 451, 453, 571, and 630.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations of Mindy Brashears, of Texas, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Food Safety; Katherine Andrea Lemos, of California, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board for a term of five years; Katherine Andrea Lemos, of California, to be Chairperson of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board for a term of five years; James E. McPherson, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of the Army; and Matthew P. Donovan, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness?

The nominations were agreed to, en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. BENNET, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 3568. A bill to require the President to use authorities under the Defense Production Act of 1950 to require emergency production of medical equipment to address the COVID-19 outbreak; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. SMITH, Mr. SULLIVAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. DAINES, Mr. JONES, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. TESTER, Mr.

BARRASSO, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. YOUNG, Ms. ROSEN, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 3569. A bill to help small business broadband providers keep customers connected; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. Kaine, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CARPER, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 3570. A bill to provide for the expedited procurement of equipment needed to combat COVID-19 under the Defense Production Act of 1950; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BROWN:

S. 3571. A bill to require member banks to maintain pass-through digital dollar wallets for certain persons, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. PERDUE:

S. Res. 550. A resolution commending the people in the United States who are carrying out essential tasks during the unprecedented time of crisis created by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 948

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) were added as cosponsors of S. 948, a bill to provide incentives to physicians to practice in rural and medically underserved communities, and for other purposes.

S. 3509

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3509, a bill to provide borrowers the right to request forbearance on mortgage loan payments due to a declared disaster, and for other purposes.

S. 3551

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3551, a bill to help small businesses access capital and create jobs by reauthorizing the successful State Small Business Credit Initiative.

S. 3559

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr.

LANKFORD), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 3559, a bill to provide emergency financial assistance to rural health care facilities and providers impacted by the COVID-19 emergency.

S. 3565

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3565, a bill to amend the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act to provide additional protections for consumers and small business owners from debt collection during a major disaster or emergency.

S. RES. 548

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 548, a resolution amending the Standing Rules of the Senate to enable the participation of absent Senators during a national crisis.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 550—COMMENDING THE PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES WHO ARE CARRYING OUT ESSENTIAL TASKS DURING THE UNPRECEDENTED TIME OF CRISIS CREATED BY THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

Mr. PERDUE submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 550

Whereas the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (referred to in this preamble as "COVID-19") has created an unprecedented health crisis that has caused significant economic risks and harm to the well-being of the United States;

Whereas the United States is racing to address the uncertainty caused by that crisis while ensuring that people have access to critical care and the essential items they need;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Homeland Security, other Federal agencies, and State and local governments are tirelessly leading the United States through that unprecedented crisis;

Whereas health workers are on the front lines leading the charge to solve the crisis, flatten the curve, and protect the United States;

Whereas first responders show bravery and courage by putting themselves at risk while providing critical care to those who have

COVID-19 and other infectious diseases and conditions;

Whereas the brave members of the National Guard are always ready and always available to respond in times of need;

Whereas truck drivers, delivery persons, airline workers, and supply chain specialists are transporting critical medical goods between hospitals, essential items to stores, and food and delivered goods to the homes of people throughout the United States;

Whereas the energy industry is helping the United States by providing the power necessary for hospitals, governments, and businesses to work day and night responding to the crisis;

Whereas farmers and grocery store workers are feeding communities and helping families across the United States put food on the table;

Whereas educators in the United States have adapted quickly to distance and online teaching and continue to provide the children of the United States with a high-quality education under uncertain circumstances; and

Whereas janitorial-services businesses and staff are keeping buildings and businesses across the United States safe by providing the critical cleaning services necessary to stop the spread of COVID-19: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes—

(A) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Homeland Security, other Federal agencies, and State and local governments for tirelessly leading the United States through the unprecedented crisis created by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (referred to in this resolution as "COVID-19");

(B) the health workers who are on the front lines leading the charge to solve the crisis, flatten the curve, and protect the United States;

(C) the first responders who show bravery and courage by putting themselves at risk while providing critical care to those who have COVID-19 and other infectious diseases and conditions;

(D) the brave members of the National Guard who are always ready and always available to respond in times of need;

(E) the truck drivers, delivery persons, airline workers, and supply chain specialists who are transporting—

(i) critical medical goods between hospitals;

(ii) essential items to stores; and

(iii) food and delivered goods to the homes of people throughout the United States;

(F) the energy industry for helping the United States by providing the power necessary for hospitals, governments, and businesses to work day and night responding to the crisis;

(G) the farmers and grocery store workers who are feeding communities and helping families across the United States put food on the table;

(H) the educators in the United States who—

(i) have adapted quickly to distance and online teaching; and

(ii) continue to provide the children of the United States with a high-quality education under uncertain circumstances; and

(I) the janitorial-services businesses and staff that are keeping buildings and businesses across the United States safe by providing the critical cleaning services necessary to stop the spread of COVID-19;

(2) commends the people described in subparagraphs (A) through (I) of paragraph (1) who are carrying out the essential tasks described in those subparagraphs; and

(3) salutes the leadership that those people have shown in their communities and across the United States during an unprecedented time of crisis.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1569. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 748, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1570. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 748, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1571. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 748, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1572. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 748, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1573. Mr. SCOTT, of South Carolina (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. SASSE, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 748, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1569. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 748, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . CONDITIONS ON LOAN OR PURCHASE AUTHORITY FOR WARRANTS AND DEBT INSTRUMENTS.

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may not make any loan, or make any commitment to loan, any funds authorized, appropriated, or otherwise dedicated under this Act or purchase, or make any commitment to purchase, any asset under the authority of this Act, unless the Secretary receives from the institution to which such loans are to be made or from which such assets are to be purchased—

(A) in the case of an institution, the securities of which are traded on a national securities exchange, a warrant giving the right to the Secretary to receive nonvoting common stock or preferred stock in such institution, or voting stock with respect to which, the Secretary agrees not to exercise voting power, as the Secretary determines appropriate; or

(B) in the case of any institution other than one described in subparagraph (A), a warrant for common or preferred stock, or a senior debt instrument from such institution, as described in paragraph (2)(C).

(2) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The terms and conditions of any warrant or senior debt instrument required under paragraph (1) shall meet the following requirements:

(A) PURPOSES.—Such terms and conditions shall, at a minimum, be designed—

(i) to provide for reasonable participation by the Secretary, for the benefit of taxpayers, in equity appreciation in the case of a warrant or other equity security, or a reasonable interest rate premium, in the case of a debt instrument; and

(ii) to provide additional protection for the taxpayer against losses from sale of assets by the Secretary under this Act.

(B) **AUTHORITY TO SELL, EXERCISE, OR SURRENDER.**—The Secretary may sell, exercise, or surrender a warrant or any senior debt instrument received under this subsection, based on the conditions established under subparagraph (A).

(C) **CONVERSION.**—The warrant shall provide that if, after the warrant is received by the Secretary under this subsection, the institution that issued the warrant is no longer listed or traded on a national securities exchange or securities association, as described in paragraph (1)(A), such warrants shall convert to senior debt, or contain appropriate protections for the Secretary to ensure that the Treasury is appropriately compensated for the value of the warrant, in an amount determined by the Secretary.

(D) **PROTECTIONS.**—Any warrant representing securities to be received by the Secretary under this subsection shall contain anti-dilution provisions of the type employed in capital market transactions, as determined by the Secretary. Such provisions shall protect the value of the securities from market transactions such as stock splits, stock distributions, dividends, and other distributions, mergers, and other forms of reorganization or recapitalization.

(E) **EXERCISE PRICE.**—The exercise price for any warrant issued pursuant to this subsection shall be set by the Secretary to make a profit for the taxpayers.

(F) **SUFFICIENCY.**—The institution shall guarantee to the Secretary that it has authorized shares of nonvoting stock available to fulfill its obligations under this subsection. Should the institution not have sufficient authorized shares, including preferred shares that may carry dividend rights equal to a multiple number of common shares, the Secretary may, to the extent necessary, accept a senior debt note in an amount, and on such terms as will compensate the Secretary with equivalent value, in the event that a sufficient shareholder vote to authorize the necessary additional shares cannot be obtained.

(3) **EXCEPTIONS.**—

(A) **DE MINIMIS.**—The Secretary shall establish de minimis exceptions to the requirements of this subsection, based on the size of the cumulative loans to and transactions of assets purchased from any one institution for the duration of the program, at not more than \$100,000,000.

(B) **OTHER EXCEPTIONS.**—The Secretary shall establish an exception to the requirements of this subsection and appropriate alternative requirements for any participating institution that is legally prohibited from issuing securities and debt instruments, so as not to allow circumvention of the requirements of this section.

SA 1570. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 748, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. 1114. PAYMENTS TO STATES IN LIEU OF LOANS.

(a) **PAYMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Out of the amount appropriated under section 1106(a)(1), the Administrator shall pay each State the amount determined under paragraph (2).

(2) **STATE PAYMENT AMOUNT.**—

(A) **STATE SHARE OF 51 PERCENT OF FUNDING.**—With respect to each State, the amount determined for the State under this paragraph is the sum of the State shares deter-

mined under subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively.

(B) **STATE SHARE OF LENDING AMOUNT.**—The State share determined under this subparagraph for a State is an amount equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

(i) the State allocation percentage; by

(ii) the product obtained by multiplying—

(I) 0.51; by

(II) the amount appropriated under section 1106(a)(1).

(C) **STATE SHARE OF SALARIES AND EXPENSES.**—The State share determined under this subparagraph for a State is an amount equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

(i) the State allocation percentage; by

(ii) the product obtained by multiplying—

(I) 0.51; by

(II) the amount appropriated under section 1106(a)(2).

(3) **STATE ALLOCATION PERCENTAGE.**—For purposes of this subsection, the State allocation percentage for any State is an amount (expressed as a percentage) equal to the quotient of—

(A) the number of citizens of the United States in such State; and

(B) the total number of citizens of the United States in all States.

(b) **USE OF FUNDS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Governor of a State may use amounts paid to the State under this section to—

(A) minimize small business bankruptcies as a result of the coronavirus crisis; or

(B) minimize small business job losses as a result of the coronavirus crisis.

(2) **STATE LOANS AND LOAN GUARANTEES.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Governor of a State may make loans or loan guarantees to carry out the purposes of paragraph (1).

(B) **LOAN FORGIVENESS.**—The Governor of a State that receives amounts under this section may forgive loans made in the same manner as provided for loans forgiven under section 1105.

(c) **PERIOD TO CLAIM.**—Not less than 24 hours after the date of enactment of this Act, the Governor of a State shall notify the Administration of its intent to claim the State payment amount determined under subsection (a)(2). Any unclaimed amounts shall be otherwise available to the Administration as provided in this title.

At the appropriate place in title II of division A, add the following:

SEC. ____ . PAYMENTS TO STATES IN LIEU OF TAX BENEFITS.

(a) **PAYMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of the Treasury shall pay to each State an amount equal to the product of—

(A) the applicable amount; and

(B) the State allocation percentage.

(2) **APPLICABLE AMOUNT.**—For purposes of paragraph (1), the applicable amount is the amount equal to the sum of—

(A) the aggregate amount of reductions in credits allowed under section 6428 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 by reason of subsection (j)(1) thereof (as added by subsection (b)); and

(B) the reduction in the estimated loss of revenue resulting from the provisions of, or amendments made by, each section of [sub-title C of this title] (determined before the application of subsection (c)) by reason of the application of such subsection.

(3) **STATE ALLOCATION PERCENTAGE.**—For purposes of paragraph (1), the State allocation percentage for any State is an amount (expressed as a percentage) equal to the quotient of—

(A) the number of citizens of the United States in such State; and

(B) the total number of citizens of the United States in all States.

(4) **AMOUNTS RECEIVED FROM STATES EXCLUDED FROM INCOME.**—For purposes of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, if a taxpayer receives any amount or benefit from a State under a program established after the date of the enactment of this Act that was funded with amounts paid to the State under this subsection, such amount or benefit shall not be taken into account in determining gross income.

(5) **USE OF FUNDS.**—The Governor of a State may use amounts paid to the State under this subsection to—

(A) minimize small business bankruptcies as a result of the coronavirus crisis; or

(B) minimize small business job losses as a result of the coronavirus crisis.

(b) **51 PERCENT REDUCTION IN TAX REBATES.**—Section 6428 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by this Act, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(f-1) **REDUCTION IN CREDIT.**—The amount of the credit allowed under this section (determined without regard to this subsection and after the application of subsection (1)(limitation)) shall be reduced by 51 percent of such amount.”

(c) **51 PERCENT REDUCTION IN BUSINESS TAX PROVISIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The provisions of, and amendments made by, each section of [sub-title C of this title] of this Act shall be applied, under regulations established by the Secretary of the Treasury, in a manner such that the estimated loss of revenue resulting from the provisions of, or amendments made by, each such section (determined after the application of this subsection) is not more than 51 percent of the estimated loss of revenue resulting from the provisions of, or amendments made by, each such section (determined before the application of this section).

(2) **REGULATIONS.**—The regulations described in paragraph (1) shall be issued not later than the date that is 10 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

At the end of title IV of division A, add the following:

SEC. 4022. PAYMENTS TO STATES IN LIEU OF FEDERAL LOANS, LOAN GUARANTEES, OR OTHER INVESTMENTS.

(a) **NONAPPLICATION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, any provisions of this title that are directly contrary to the authority under this section shall have no force or effect.

(b) **PAYMENTS TO STATES.**—From the amount appropriated under section 4019(a) to the fund established under section 5302(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, to carry out this title, the Secretary shall, not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, pay each State the amount determined for the State under subsection (c).

(c) **STATE PAYMENT AMOUNT.**—

(1) **STATE SHARE OF 51 PERCENT OF FEDERAL PROGRAM FUNDING.**—With respect to each State, the amount determined for the State under this subsection is the sum of the State shares determined under paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively.

(2) **STATE SHARE OF 51 PERCENT OF GENERAL FEDERAL PROGRAM FUNDING.**—The State share determined under this paragraph for a State is the amount equal to—

(A) the State allocation percentage; multiplied by—

(B) the product of—

(i) 0.51; and

(ii) the amount appropriated under section 4019(a), reduced by \$100,000,000.

(3) **STATE SHARE OF FEDERAL FUNDING FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.**—The State share determined under this paragraph for a State is the amount equal to the product of—

(A) the State allocation percentage; and

(B) \$100,000,000.

(d) **STATE ALLOCATION PERCENTAGE.**—For purposes of this section, the State allocation percentage for any State is an amount (expressed as a percentage) equal to the quotient of—

(1) the number of citizens of the United States in such State; and

(2) the total number of citizens of the United States in all States.

(e) **USE OF FUNDS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Governor of a State may use the amount paid to the State under this section to—

(A) minimize small business bankruptcies as a result of the coronavirus crisis; or

(B) minimize small business job losses as a result of the coronavirus crisis.

(2) **STATE LOANS AND LOAN GUARANTEES.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Governor of the State may make loans or loan guarantees to carry out the purposes of paragraph (1).

(B) **LIMITATION.**—The total amount of loans and loan guarantees made by the Governor of a State using the amount paid to the State under this section shall not exceed the State share of such amount determined under subsection (c)(2).

(f) **APPLICATION OF CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL LOANS, LOAN GUARANTEES, OR OTHER INVESTMENTS.**—The following requirements shall apply to loans and loan guarantees made by the Governor of a State using the amount paid to the State under this section in the same manner as such requirements apply to loans, loan guarantees, or other investments made by the Secretary (and, with respect to a State, by substituting “Governor” for “Secretary”):

(1) Subsection (c)(2) of section 4003 (relating to determinations for making loans and loan guarantees).

(2) Subsection (d) of section 4003 (relating to financial protection of Government).

(3) Subsection (f) of section 4003 (relating to administrative provisions, except that the State share determined for the State under subsection (c)(3) shall be substituted for “\$100,000,000”).

(4) Section 4004 (relating to limitation on certain employee compensation).

(g) **DEPOSIT OF PROCEEDS.**—Amounts collected by the Governor of a State with respect to loans and loan guarantees made under this section, including the repayment of principal, proceeds of investments, earnings, and interest collected, shall be paid to the Secretary and deposited in the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts.

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) Of amounts appropriated under this division, each State shall receive the payment amount determined under subsection (b).

(b)(1) The State payment amount determined under this subsection for a State is an amount equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

(A) the State allocation percentage; by

(B) the product obtained by multiplying—

(i) 0.51; by

(ii) the sum of all amounts appropriated under this division.

(2) For purposes of paragraph (1), the State allocation percentage for any State is an amount (expressed as a percentage) equal to the quotient of—

(A) the number of citizens of the United States in such State; and

(B) the total number of citizens of the United States in all States.

(3) The Governor of a State may use the amount paid to the State under this section to—

(A) minimize small business bankruptcies as a result of the coronavirus crisis; or

(B) minimize small business job losses as a result of the coronavirus crisis.

SA 1571. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 748, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title III of division A, insert the following:

SEC. 3717. MEDICARE SKILLED NURSING FACILITY PROSPECTIVE PAYMENT SYSTEM ADJUSTMENT FOR COVID-19 RESIDENTS DURING EMERGENCY PERIOD.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1888(e) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395yy(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “and (12)” and inserting “(12), and (13)”;

(2) by inserting after paragraph (12) the following new paragraph:

“(13) **ADJUSTMENT FOR RESIDENTS WITH COVID-19.**—During the emergency period described in section 1135(g)(1)(B), in the case of a resident who has a principal or secondary diagnosis of COVID-19, the per diem amount of payment otherwise applicable shall be increased by 15 percent to reflect increased costs associated with such residents.”.

(b) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may implement the amendments made by subsection (a) by program instruction or otherwise.

SA 1572. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 748, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in subtitle E of title III of division A, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PAUSING ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS UNDER THE 340B DRUG PRICING PROGRAM.

Section 340B(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 256B(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(11) **PAUSING ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS.**—The Secretary shall, for each of fiscal years 2020 and 2021, pause the process of determining whether an entity is a covered entity, as defined in paragraph (4), in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency to ensure that no entity that was previously determined to be such a covered entity would lose eligibility status for the program under this section during such emergency.”.

SA 1573. Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. SASSE, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 748, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. TAX CREDIT TO SMALL BUSINESSES TO COVER RENT AND MORTGAGE PAYMENTS.

(a) **ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In the case of an eligible small business, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for the

first taxable year beginning on or after January 1, 2019, an amount equal to the sum of any qualified rent or mortgage expenditures which—

(A) relate to any real property which is primarily used in a trade or business of such eligible small business which is a qualified trade or business (as defined in section 199A(d)), and

(B) are paid or incurred by such eligible small business during the first 4 months of 2020.

(2) **LIMITATION.**—The amount of the credit allowable to a taxpayer under paragraph (1) for any taxable year shall not exceed \$50,000.

(b) **ELIGIBLE SMALL BUSINESS.**—For purposes of this section—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The term “eligible small business” means, with respect to calendar year 2019, an employer who is employed an average of not greater than 500 full-time employees on business days during such calendar year.

(2) **APPLICATION OF AGGREGATION RULE FOR EMPLOYERS.**—All persons treated as a single employer under subsection (b), (c), (m), or (o) of section 414 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall be treated as 1 employer.

(c) **QUALIFIED RENT OR MORTGAGE EXPENDITURES.**—For purposes of this section, the term “qualified rent or mortgage expenditures” means and expenditure for rent or mortgage payments (not including any amounts attributable to utilities) that are paid pursuant to a contract entered into before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) **EXPEDITED AMENDED RETURN PROCESS.**—In the case of any eligible small business which has timely filed an amendment to the tax return for such business for the taxable year described in subsection (a) for the sole purpose of claiming the credit allowed under this section, the Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary’s delegate) shall establish a separate and expedited process for reviewing and processing such amended returns.

(e) **REGULATIONS.**—The Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary’s delegate) shall prescribe such regulations or guidance as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this section, including regulations and guidance to prevent and identify fraud through the use of relevant information submitted by third parties which relates to the rent or mortgage expenditures claimed by a taxpayer for purposes of the credit allowed under this section.

(f) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2020

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, March 24; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 748.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 9:17 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 24, 2020, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 23, 2020:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

MINDY BRASHEARS, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR FOOD SAFETY.

CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD

KATHERINE ANDREA LEMOS, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS.

KATHERINE ANDREA LEMOS, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE CHAIRPERSON OF THE CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

JAMES E. MCPHERSON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE ARMY.

MATTHEW P. DONOVAN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. BRADLEY J. ANDROS
CAPT. MARK D. BEHNING
CAPT. PUTNAM H. BROWNE
CAPT. MATTHEW J. BURNS
CAPT. JOSEPH F. CAHILL III
CAPT. BRIAN L. DAVIES
CAPT. LAWRENCE F. LEGREE
CAPT. MARC J. MIGUEZ
CAPT. CARLOS A. SARDIELLO
CAPT. RICHARD E. SEIF, JR.
CAPT. DEREK A. TRINQUE
CAPT. DENNIS VELEZ
CAPT. DARRYL L. WALKER
CAPT. ROBERT D. WESTENDORFF
CAPT. THOMAS R. WILLIAMS II