

We have to be doing far more to get our partners in the region to do more— allies and competitors alike—in service of a goal we all share. There is ample support for all of these efforts in Congress.

Senator FISCHER and I worked together to provide even more funding for missile defense than the President requested because it is so important. Senator SASSE and I have worked together to gather options from some of the Nation's best and brightest minds on how to shape sanctions that could actually impact North Korea's ability to continue their nuclear program, whether Kim Jong Un agrees to it or not.

I believe there will be ample support among our allies—and even our adversaries—around the world if we provide the kind of clear, forceful, and effective leadership America has always been known for in the past.

There is not a nation on Earth that is safer with the existence of North Korea's nuclear weapons program, and that includes North Korea itself. However hard the path forward may be, we can all agree that the status quo is not enough. It is not even close and will not continue to work.

We cannot fix that without a strategy. I am here today asking the administration—once again, reaching out our hand to them—to take that first essential step forward and asking my colleagues to support my amendment to the national defense bill to require the administration to submit a North Korea strategy to Congress within 90 days. We can do this together.

I yield back.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business, for debate only, be extended until 12 noon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

FINDING COMMON GROUND

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, before we adjourned for the recess, I came to this lectern to issue a call for comity, cooperation, and compromise. My message that day was simple: If we are serious about legislating—if we are truly committed to doing the work the American people sent us here to do—then we must look beyond the horizon of our differences and find common ground.

Since January, this Congress has been its own worst enemy. It has been mired in the muck of its own making, bogged down by partisan squabbles and gripped by gridlock—the likes of which I have never seen in all my years of public service. I wish I could say the situation across the country is better, but sadly it isn't. The polarization we see in the Senate is only indicative of the division we see all around the Nation. The events of August threw that division into sharp relief, but it also showed us our ability to heal—our remarkable capacity to lay aside superficial differences in moments of crisis to come together as one.

In Charlottesville and Houston, August brought us a tale of two cities—one that showed us at once both the weaknesses and strengths of our great country.

In Charlottesville, we saw the worst of America on full display. In the violence, vitriol, and vulgar racism of Nazi demonstrators, we stared evil in the face, and in the terrorist attack that ensued, we saw the ideology of hatred brought to its logical endpoint. None of us will soon forget this attack on innocent civilians. I am sure, in the stagnant human air of that hot summer's day, we caught a glimpse of the darkness buried deep in the soul of America.

Charlottesville was more than a tragic event. It was a gut-check moment for all Americans. It was a national low point that demanded all of us to take stock of where we are as a society and where our rhetoric is taking us.

The men who perpetrated this horrific act of violence—whether by their words or by their actions—represent the dregs of a dying culture, but if the violence in Charlottesville showed America at its worst, then the rescue and recovery efforts in hurricane-ravaged Houston showed our country at its best.

Just 2 weeks after the brutality in Charlottesville, our Nation again watched in horror as Hurricane Harvey made landfall in Texas, unleashing a flood of biblical proportions. Relentless rainfall battered the coast for days, leaving in its wake a trail of destruction and shattered life.

Harvey left behind unprecedented devastation, but it also gave us countless stories of hope and heroism. On national TV, we saw a weatherman rushing to the aid of a stranded driver, pulling the man to safety before the current could take him away. We saw everyday Texans wade in the neck-deep waters to form a human chain, saving the life of a stranger trapped in his car. We watched as three teenage boys navigated the streets of Houston in a fishing boat, driving from house to house to rescue their neighbors as the floodwaters poured in.

These are just a few stories among thousands more. These stories remind us of the hope and humanity borne of tragedy. They bear testament to the innate goodness of the American peo-

ple, and they show us that, in moments of crisis, our capacity to come together for the good of our communities is really unparalleled.

Tragedies like those in Houston strip us of all that is superfluous, leaving behind only our common humanity. In the moments of peril that moved tens of thousands of Texans to band together to save their city, considerations of race, religion, class, or creed fell into complete irrelevance. The first responders, volunteers, and Good Samaritans who put their own lives at risk to rescue others served indiscriminately. They took no thought for whom they were helping—what their background or beliefs were. Houston's heroes saw only lives that needed saving, and they went to work.

If there is any good that comes of tragedy, it is that for a brief but beautiful moment, we are able to see each other as we truly are—not as Republicans or Democrats, rich or poor, Black or White, but as members of the same community, partakers of the same human condition and children of the same God. For a brief moment, we are able to see each other as Americans.

I pray that the hope of Houston may inspire all of us here in the Senate. I pray that we may look to the city's example in the work we have before us, setting aside our petty partisan differences to come together for the good of the Nation. I pray that, as Senators, we might see each other as friends and equals, partners and patriots, anxiously engaged in the important work of legislating. I pray that we can esteem each other by our mutual love for this great country, not by the R or D that follows our names.

Now, more than ever, we need strength and unity here in the Senate. The challenges we have before us are enormous. In the next few weeks alone, we need to secure emergency relief funding for the victims of Hurricane Harvey, raise the debt ceiling, fix our broken Tax Code, and find a way forward on immigration reform. Our to-do list just keeps growing.

Each of these items taken on its own is challenging, but taken as a whole, our agenda is daunting. But I truly believe we are up to the task. I truly believe we can step up to the plate, just as the people of Texas did, to tackle the challenges before us.

As I said before we broke for recess, the Senate is capable of so much more. I know because I have seen the Senate at its best. I have seen the Senate when it truly lived up to its reputation as the world's greatest deliberative body. I believe we can again see this body at its best.

My central message today is simple. We can do hard things. I know because we have done them before. So let's make laws, not excuses. Let's move forward on an agenda that puts the needs of America's families front and center.

This is an important pivotal time in our Nation's history. It is up to us to