

right now and reshaping our planet for the worse, moving so quickly that, at some point, we will not be able to recover no matter what we do.

The world will be so much worse for our children and grandchildren. I think of my 8-month-old—just turned 8 months on the 24th—my little grandson. Will his world be the same as ours? Will it be just as beautiful, or will it be flooding and fires and changes that make his life and the lives of his whole generation far more difficult? If we do nothing, that will happen.

Carbon levels in the atmosphere are at the highest point ever in human history. Just days ago, NBC reported that this will be the hottest July on record. Last month, June, was the hottest June on record.

We all know the consequences will be devastating, just devastating to our planet if we fail to take action soon. It is time for the Senate to debate serious, significant policies to address climate change. And, parenthetically, it is another place MCCONNELL's legislative graveyard unfortunately gains—gains more and more. He will not do anything on climate change, as important as it is.

Let me thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his leadership on this issue. Maybe Leader MCCONNELL will read his 250 speeches and have a change of heart. I doubt it, but who knows? I wish that all of my colleagues on the other side would listen to him and join Democrats in our efforts to pass legislation to combat climate change.

PUERTO RICO

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, finally, one more point on Puerto Rico. Last night, the Governor of Puerto Rico, Ricardo Rossello, announced he will resign on August 2. I am glad that the Governor has listened to the voices of the people of Puerto Rico. It is clear he lost their trust, their respect, and certainly the mandate to govern. The most important thing now is a quick and orderly transition of power so that our fellow citizens on the island can turn the page on this difficult chapter and move forward.

No matter what, we have to stand with the people of Puerto Rico. The island is still a far way off from recovery after the devastation of recent hurricanes. It is essential that the local Puerto Rican economy continue to recover and that basic services performed by the government continue undisturbed as that process continues.

As a new Governor enters office, we pledge to do whatever we can to ensure the people of Puerto Rico receive the aid and the support they need. We fought incredibly hard on the disaster bill to make sure the people of Puerto Rico are not treated worse than any other U.S. citizens. The events of the past 2 weeks should in no way inhibit that aid from reaching the island quickly and efficiently. It is so badly needed. I will be watching and doing

everything in my power to guarantee that is the case.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I come to the floor today to sound once again the alarm against Republicans' efforts to throw the lives of millions of families into chaos and uncertainty and to urge my colleagues to reverse course and join Democrats to protect people's healthcare before it is too late.

A few weeks ago, President Trump and Republican attorneys general argued in court to create a healthcare crisis for families in our country. If Republicans win their blatantly partisan lawsuit, the consequences could be sweeping and devastating. Tens of millions of people who have healthcare coverage through Medicaid Expansion or the exchanges could lose it, as could many young adults who are on their parents' insurance.

Over 100 million people with pre-existing conditions could lose protections that stop insurance companies from charging them more, excluding benefits they need or denying them coverage entirely. Patients could lose protections that require insurers to cover essential health benefits like prescription drug costs, maternity care, emergency care, or mental healthcare and more. Limits on how much patients have to pay out of pocket could go away, while lifetime and annual caps on patients' benefits could come back even to those insured through their employers.

Republicans have refused to acknowledge what is actually at stake now for the patients and families whose health they are putting at risk, and they have made it all too clear that despite the horrible consequences they are setting up, despite the lives they are throwing needlessly into jeopardy, Republicans are going to go full steam ahead with this reckless lawsuit to strike down healthcare for millions and without any plan to do anything if they win.

Some Republicans have tried to dodge this fact by saying they will fig-

ure it out after they win. That is an incredibly telling and incredibly alarming position. It is about as comforting as an arsonist telling you he will rebuild your house after he burns it down.

Let's be clear. Republicans have no plans for the patients who lose their coverage, no plans for the families who will see their healthcare costs go up, and no plans for people nationwide who rely on these protections for pre-existing conditions that could be taken away. They have no plan for all the people who will be hurt by the damage they are fighting to cause, and families expect better. They deserve better.

This is not rocket science. People want us to protect their healthcare, not take it away. They want us to bring healthcare costs down, not send them certainly higher. They want us to fight for them, not against them.

Republicans have made the wrong choice time and again. So I call on my Republican colleagues to stop this chaos and work with us. Let's fight for patients before it is too late. The clock is ticking, and patients and families are watching closely. If Republicans in the Trump administration refuse to end this partisan lawsuit, families and patients will be the ones who suffer the consequences, and they will not forget the Republicans who stood by and cheered and let it happen.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MOON-MARS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, those of us who have had a chance over some time now to work with the former Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, know that he is a man of ideas and is often thinking well beyond the moment. I had a chance the other day to read a paper that he prepared on President Trump's Moon-Mars Development Project, and I want to borrow heavily from his thinking as I talk about this project today.

It is an important time. We just spent significant time remembering, appreciating, and looking back at the 50th anniversary of American astronauts landing on the Moon and returning safely. Fifty years goes more quickly than you might think.

But for the first time in that 50 years, we are really at a point where there is a chance that we could cease to be the leading power in space. We decided we were going to become the leading power in space; we became the leading power in space; we have been the leading power in space. But that is

not necessarily a given, and you can last only so long living on your past accomplishments.

President Trump, on the Fourth of July, made this comment: "I want you to know that we are going to be back on the moon very soon, and someday soon we will plant an American flag on Mars."

My guess is that was received with sort of the same amount of skepticism as President Kennedy's challenge was more than 50 years ago. There is no question that the Artemis Project that President Trump is talking about is not the Apollo Project 50 years later. This is no longer an effort just to go somewhere and get back. We know we can do that. It is an effort to look at where we might go next and why we might benefit from that.

In May of 1961, President Kennedy challenged the Congress by saying we "should commit [ourselves] to achieving the goal"—talking about the goal of getting to the Moon—we "should commit [ourselves] to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to Earth."

There was pretty heavy skepticism. I think 58 percent of the American people polled said they were opposed to doing that. Why would we send somebody to the Moon and worry about whether we could get them there? Of course, if we got them there, we would want to get them back. There was great skepticism.

So a little over a year later at Rice University, President Kennedy tried again. He said: "We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard."

That is one of his famous quotes. If you look back at President Kennedy's challenge to the country, you hear it: We are going not because it is easy, but because it is hard.

He went on to say "because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one we intend to win."

There is nothing wrong with an America that wants to win. There is nothing wrong with an America that doesn't want to take second place. There is nothing wrong with an America that wants to set a standard that everybody else can hope to achieve.

We had been caught a little flat-footed in the midfifties when the Russians put a satellite in space—Sputnik. Americans would go out and see if they could measure when it was passing over because they had put something up there that appeared to be there perpetually.

Then there was a cosmonaut in space. President Kennedy said that we don't want to accept anything more than the opportunity to meet big challenges and show what we can do to test ourselves.

The Vice President of the United States, Vice President PENCE, said at

the National Space Council in Huntsville, AL, on March 26 of this year that "50 years ago, 'one small step for man' became 'one giant leap for mankind.'"

You really had to be trying to avoid it not to hear that quote last week as it was being repeated over and over again. The Vice President said that now it's come time for us to "make the next 'giant leap' and return American astronauts to the Moon, establish a permanent base there, and develop the technologies to take American astronauts to Mars and beyond."

That's the next "giant leap."

You will note here that the direct connection between Moon development and going to Mars, as the President put it, is there. It is the reason to go back to the Moon. It is the reason to do what we can to understand the Moon. Our goal is not just getting to the Moon. Of course, we have already done that. Our goal is to be there and to do that in a way that works for us.

John Marburger, President George W. Bush's science adviser, said in 2006: "The Moon is the closest source of material that lies far up Earth's gravity well."

This is the closest place we can go and get material that can be used with 3D printing and all sorts of things that are possible to construct on the Moon that weren't possible to construct anywhere in that same way just a few years ago.

The first phase of science on the Moon would be a lot like exploring Antarctica. I haven't been to Antarctica. I would like to go sometime. We don't have people on Antarctica because Antarctica is an easy place to live; we have people staying all the time on Antarctica to see what we could learn by being on the continent of Antarctica all the time. The next phase of the Moon would be like that, with people going to the Moon, staying on the Moon, and looking at opportunities on the parts of the Moon where we believe there is ice. I know the formula for this. If you have ice, you probably have some form of water. If you have water, lots of things can happen that might not happen otherwise.

This is a project that will inspire others to want to be part of it, whether it is Jeff Bezos or Elon Musk or Richard Branson or Paul Allen—who has passed on, but was intrigued by the Moon. They are all people who have great private resources.

America was founded on a public-private model. Jamestown, Plimouth Plantation, and the East India Company all had private individuals with government sponsorship trying to make something happen that wouldn't happen otherwise. That, I suggest, can happen on the Moon.

In Newt Gingrich's telling of the challenge on the Moon, he repeated that great story of what happened at Wollman Rink and how it might relate to what could happen on the Moon if you are not bound by the normal things that bind a lot of people. Every

person thinking about the Moon-Mars project, according to former Speaker Gingrich, should look at what Donald Trump did at the Wollman Rink. The Wollman Rink was a very popular site for ice skating in New York City in 1980 when it broke down. It totally broke down. The city of New York spent 6 years and \$13 million trying to fix the ice rink. Fortunately, I guess, for the city of New York and ice skaters who go there, the abandoned ice rink happened to be within sight of President Trump's apartment. He kept complaining about the ice rink and the failure of the city to do anything about the ice rink. Finally, Mayor Koch said to Donald Trump: Why don't you fix it if you think this is so easily done? And he did. He fixed the ice rink in 4 months for \$2.25 million. I remember the city had already spent \$13 million and failed to fix the ice rink.

The first year after the ice rink was fixed, 225,000 people skated on the ice rink. One reason the President was able to do that as a private citizen was that he wasn't bound by the things that bind most people. He wasn't bound by the things that bind the government. The historic project to fix the Wollman Rink achieved the goal at 1/5 the cost and 1/18 the time that the city had used and did not get it done, and ice skaters flourished.

The same kinds of things could happen if we looked beyond the normal boundaries of what could happen in this project that the President has talked about.

Remember, on the effort to get to the Moon, President Kennedy turned that project over to Vice President Johnson and said: You are going to be in charge of NASA, and you are going to be the point person on the Moon project. So there is a little history there that may be repeating itself when, in March this year in Huntsville, AL, the Vice President outlined the principles we could use to meet the goals that the President had established for our efforts in space.

Principle No. 1 was to establish a big goal and then stick to it. Remember, we went to the Moon to start with, not because it was easy, but because it was hard. Establish a big goal, then stick to it. "Failure to achieve our goal to return an American astronaut to the Moon in the next 5 years is not an option," according to the Vice President.

Principle No. 2, Be prepared to reach outside the traditional bureaucracy to new, entrepreneurial, private companies if it is necessary to get the job done. He went on to say:

[W]e're not committed to any one contractor. If our current contractors can't meet this objective, then we'll find ones that will. If American industry can provide critical commercial services without government development, then we'll buy them.

We will buy into that project and share it with them. If commercial rockets are the only way to get American astronauts to the Moon in the next 5 years, then commercial rockets will be the way we return to the Moon.

Principle No. 3, Be willing to change the bureaucracy rather than abandon the goal.

[We will call on NASA not just to adopt new policies but to embrace a new mindset. That begins with setting bold goals and staying on schedule.

A new mindset matters. Failure is not an option. The willingness to postpone our goal, as President Kennedy said almost 60 years ago, is not an option.

Principle No. 4, Be determined to change the bureaucracy in fundamental ways.

NASA must transform itself into a leaner, more accountable, and more agile organization. If NASA is not currently capable of landing American astronauts [men and women] on the Moon in five years, we need to change the organization, not the mission.

By the way, as for principle No. 5, I know, in the Presiding Officer's case, it is coming from private business and might be his most important principle.

Principle No. 5, Urgency must replace complacency.

The hardest thing to achieve in government is just to drive to a result. The fifth principle that the Vice President set out is exactly that. It is not just competition against our adversaries; it is, frankly, competition against our worst enemy—complacency. It is competition against our own willingness to believe that things aren't going to happen that clearly can happen.

This is a great goal. It is a step to the Moon and beyond. It is a step outside our solar system to other solar systems. In our lifetimes, we may not see much of that, but this is not about our lifetimes; this is about a step into the future.

I applaud the President and the Vice President for their leadership here. I look forward to applying those five principles. By the way, I think almost all of those principles are five principles we could apply to government every day, and we would have a more effective government if we would.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader.

ELECTION SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I have a unanimous consent request. I know my colleague from Connecticut has one as well. In deference to the leader's schedule, I will speak for a few minutes on mine, and then I will yield to Senator BLUMENTHAL. He will speak for a few minutes on his, and then we will wait for the leader, who is supposed to come out in about 5 minutes, to object, if he so chooses. We will make the request after that.

Now, yesterday, everybody heard Special Counsel Mueller, and there was a lot of dispute about obstruction of justice and things like that. There was virtually no dispute about two facts that Mueller said. One, the Russians interfered in our elections in 2016, and, two, they plan to do it in 2020.

We rise on the floor because, when Russia or any foreign power seeks to interfere in our elections, it eats at the wellsprings of our democracy.

The Founding Fathers, in their wisdom, said that one of the greatest threats to our democracy was foreign interference. Now we are faced with the specter of it, and we are asking our Republican colleagues to join with us in doing everything we can to stop it. This is serious stuff.

Mr. Mueller said yesterday:

Russian interference wasn't a single attempt. They are doing it as we sit here, and they expect to do it in the next campaign.

That is Robert Mueller, one of the most authoritative voices on this issue.

Mueller warned that "much more needs to be done" to fortify against future attacks, not just from Russia but from others looking to interfere in our elections as well.

Mr. Mueller is not the only one calling for action on election security. FBI Director Wray, appointed by President Trump, has said the same. Director of National Intelligence Coats, also appointed by President Trump, has stressed that foreign actors "will add new tactics as they learn from 2016."

So we must do more. This is not a Democratic issue or a Republican issue. This is not a liberal issue or a moderate issue or conservative issue. This is an issue of patriotism, of national security, of protecting the very integrity of American democracy—something so many of our forebears died for.

And what do we hear from the Republican side? Nothing. There is no credence to the claim made by the leader that we have already done enough in this Chamber. Mueller, Wray, and Coats all said that we need to do more—all of them.

Here in the Senate, the Senate Intelligence Committee, led by Senator BARR of North Carolina, a Republican, has recommended we do more. They too say otherwise. Yet Leader MCCONNELL and the Republican majority refuse to do anything.

So in a moment I am going to ask unanimous consent to pass legislation that safeguards our election. This legislation passed the House nearly a month ago. It would provide immediate resources for the States to modernize their election infrastructure and establish a consistent funding stream to maintain it.

The States say they need more money. It will require the use of paper ballots. Almost every expert agrees that that is needed to protect elections from manipulation, because if they manipulate the machines, the paper ballots will be a safeguard.

It would require States to conduct postelection risk-limiting audits, and it would shore up the cyber security of voting systems and ensure that election technology vendors are held to the highest standards so the Russians or no one else can hack into these machines and interfere.

These are not revolutionary changes. They are basic commonsense steps to greatly improve the security of our elections after President Putin conducted a systemic attack on our democracy and intends to do it again.

The House has passed this bill already. We could deliver it to the President today.

Now, the Republican leader has already indicated his intention to bury this bill in the legislative graveyard. That is a disgrace. That would be as if we said: We don't need a military. We don't need ships off our shores or planes in the air.

Attacks on our elections are as great a threat to our national security as any other, and yet, for reasons inexplicable, the Republican leader refuses to bring legislation to the floor, legislation that has been crafted in a bipartisan way.

Many of the bills that are before us have Democratic and Republican sponsors, and if the rumors are true, the leader urged the Republicans to back off.

There are only two inferences, neither good. One is that the Republican side doesn't care about interference in our elections, and the other is that they want it because maybe they think it will benefit them.

I know that President Trump doesn't like to talk about this. He childishly thinks this will cast aspersions on the legitimacy of his election. That is sort of a very babyish, selfish thing to think when our security is at risk.

But where are our Republican colleagues when our national security is threatened? Where are our Republican colleagues? If we invite the Russians to interfere by not doing enough and they do and Americans lose faith in the fundamental wellspring of America, our grand democracy, this is the beginning of the end of democracy in this country.

As George Washington, James Madison, and Benjamin Franklin warned us, we must do all we can to prevent foreign interference in our elections. By allowing this UC request to go through, we will be taking a giant first step. I hope the leader goes along.

And, again, if he says the States don't need it, the States say they do. They are the judge.

I will be asking my request in a minute, but first let me yield to Senator BLUMENTHAL, who will also have a UC request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from New York, our distinguished leader, for his very powerful and compelling remarks and for his steadfast leadership on this issue of election security.

The issue of election security goes to the core of our national security. In the last Presidential election, this Nation was attacked. It was an attack as pernicious and insidious as any in this country's history, although it was less