

could see destabilization unlike any time period, maybe in my lifetime.”

In the Middle East, Iran has been hardest hit by the new virus which has spread around the globe after first being detected in the Chinese city of Wuhan late last year. There are over 3,740 cases of the virus across the Mideast, with most linking back to the Islamic Republic which also confirmed dozens of deaths. Only a small number of cases has been reported in Sub-Saharan Africa so far.

Beasley did not give an amount for additional aid needed, but suggested it would be in the billions of dollars. Beasley spoke after a tour of Syria's northwestern Idlib province, the country's last rebel stronghold, where hundreds of thousands of civilians have been displaced in recent weeks by a Russian-backed Syrian government offensive.

U.N. agencies, including the WFP, are distributing aid in Idlib, but are often hampered by logistics problems, including shifting front lines, access restrictions and roads clogged by large numbers of people on the move.

The leaders of Russia, which backs the Syrian government, and Turkey, which backs the rebels, were meeting in Moscow on Thursday to try to avert further calamity. But any deal will likely bring only a temporary halt in the punishing offensive by the military of Syria's President Bashar Assad, which threatens continued suffering for the 3 million people trapped in Idlib.

Beasley appealed to leaders on all sides of the Syrian conflict to end the war, which has raged for nine years. “Enough is enough,” he said. “Too many people have suffered too long.”

U.S. GLOBAL LEADERSHIP COALITION,
March 5, 2020.

Hon. LINDSEY GRAHAM,
Chairman, Subcommittee on State-Foreign Operations, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. PATRICK LEAHY,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on State-Foreign Operations, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRAHAM AND RANKING MEMBER LEAHY: On behalf of the more than 500 business and NGO members of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC), including business, military, and faith-based leaders in all 50 states, I write in strong opposition to an amendment proposed by Senator Rand Paul that would offset emergency funding to address the growing coronavirus threat by canceling over \$8 billion in congressionally approved funds for the International Affairs Budget.

If enacted, this amendment would cancel critical funding for State Department, USAID, and other development programs around the world, undermining our national security and economic interests and placing America's global leadership at risk. Cuts of this magnitude would have devastating consequences on our ability to confront unprecedented global challenges—including countering China's growing influence around the world, supporting partners in the fight against extremism, and addressing the impacts of the Venezuelan refugee crisis on key allies like Colombia.

There is a strong bipartisan legacy in the Senate of rejecting deep and dangerous cuts to America's development and diplomacy programs. I urge the Senate to once again take decisive action and reject Senator Paul's shortsighted amendment. Doing so will ensure that resources already approved by Congress can be fully deployed to support cost-effective programs that advance America's interests.

Thank you for your unwavering support of America's international affairs programs and

your commitment to strengthening the critical resources needed to advance America's global leadership.

Sincerely,

LIZ SCHRAYER,
President & CEO, USGLC.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I wrap up by saying that Senator PAUL is consistent. Every time he wants to pay for something, he comes to the foreign assistance account. I understand the argument: Why are we spending over there when we have problems here? That sounds good until you realize how the world is.

On September 10, 2001, the day before 9/11, we didn't have one soldier in Afghanistan, not an embassy, not an ambassador, not a dime of aid. The Taliban were in charge, and they gave al-Qaida safe haven. That is where the planning of the attacks and 9/11 originated. Looking back, wouldn't it have been nice to have had some influence in Afghanistan on September 10?

All I can say is, I will never go back to that pre-9/11 mindset of ignoring the world, because I have learned, like most Americans, the world can come here in a very bad way or very good way, depending on how we defend ourselves.

This 1 percent of the budget—foreign assistance to deal with problems over there—is absolutely essential in terms of global health. He exempted the global health component of the foreign assistance account, but the money—\$7.76 billion—will destroy other things in the account that I think are vital to our public health here and our national security and our alliances. You cannot fight problems like this by yourself. You need partners. You need to get involved over there so the virus doesn't spread any more here than necessary.

I hope that people will listen to what Senator LEAHY just said, that this was a negotiated agreement. We all came together to get a budget. Senators SHELBY and LEAHY did a wonderful job working with the House and the White House to get us to where we are today. This amendment would upset everything. I am going to move to table it at the appropriate time.

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

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

CORONAVIRUS PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 6074, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6074) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year

ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

TRUE EQUITY ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, at the end of fiscal year 2021, the 5-year authorization for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, our Nation's foundational prekindergarten through 12th grade law, is due to expire.

While I understand that previous reauthorizations took 13 years and allowed an entire generation of students to matriculate through school systems around our Nation, I am here today to stress that our kids can't wait for the needed transformational changes to our Nation's Federal, State, and local education policies and additional funding investments.

To provide a stronger Federal partnership to States and local communities that have worked together to support transformational change that will ensure educational equity and quality for all public school students, I introduced the TRUE EQUITY Act. It stands for the Transformational Reforms and Updates to Ensure Educational Quality and Urgent Investments in Today's Youth Act.

My home State of Maryland has been long recognized as having one of the best public school systems in the country, according to the independent newspaper Education Week. This ranges from having entire county-based local school systems ranked as near the top in the Nation to individual schools producing national leaders in academic achievement. In addition, Maryland was one of the first States to offer half-day preschool for 4-year-olds, has broad access to Advanced Placement courses for high schoolers, and pays for dual-enrollment courses for high school students at our local community colleges.

I am proud of these accomplishments. However, not all of our students have found success.

In 2016, the Maryland General Assembly and the Governor of Maryland established the Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, chaired by the former chancellor of the University System of Maryland, William “Brit” Kirwan, to identify the policies and practices so that Maryland's schools perform at the level of the world's highest performing school system. The commission was charged with a number of tasks, including a review of the current funding formulas and accountability measures utilized to ensure educational equity and equality, how Maryland schools prepare students for postsecondary education in the workforce, and to make recommendations for the State on needed funding improvements across the State and local school districts.

These reviews are necessary to support growing populations of children with disabilities, how to improve and expand programs supporting postsecondary credential attainment, and

other policy changes to address the academic achievement gap that has persisted along racial, ethnic, and income levels of students of color and low-income students compared to their higher income and White peers.

To meet this expansive charge, the commission included stakeholders from across our State, including representatives of the Maryland General Assembly, including our now speaker of the Maryland House Delegates and our now State Senate president, the Governor's office, county elected leaders, education leaders, including State and local school board representatives, our State and local superintendents, leader of our State's public university system, teachers, business leaders, and leading education advocacy organizations, such as the Maryland State Education Association, Maryland Parent Teacher Association, and Maryland Family Network.

In addition to the members of the commission, the commission actively sought input from the public with numerous meetings soliciting public comment held across our State. In January 2019, the commission unanimously released their interim report that found Maryland students scored in the middle of the pack on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, known as the "Nation's report card," which is given to representative samples of 4th, 8th, and 12th graders in every State.

The gaps in achievement between socioeconomic, racial, and children with disabilities were far too large in a State like Maryland that has committed resources and established policies that are meant to provide a world-class public education system.

The commission also reported that less than half of kindergartners entering our school system were ready to learn, and fewer than 40 percent of students who are graduating from high school truly are "college or career ready." This is in spite of the estimates that by 2022 nearly two-thirds of the jobs in Maryland will require at least postsecondary credentials, whether they be nationally recognized industry certificates or 2-year or 4-year college degrees.

For instance, in 2017, just under half of all students across Maryland high schools received a proficient score on their English 10 exam. That exam helps evaluate the students' readiness for college or career. Disaggregated data shows the continued struggle to close academic achievement gaps among racial and socioeconomic groups. Along racial lines, 77 percent of Asian students and 67 percent of White students were proficient. However, only 34 percent of Hispanic students and 29 percent of African-American students earned proficiency scores.

The commission's interim report highlighted that despite Maryland being ranked as one of the top five States with the highest household median income, a large number of Maryland students are living in poverty.

Forty-three percent of Maryland students are low income and eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, meaning that they come from families at or below 185 percent of the Federal poverty line. For every 10 public schools across our State, there is a concentration of poverty where enrollment consists of at least 55 percent of students living in poverty. These schools are in all of our subdivisions except one.

In 15 percent of Maryland schools, at least 80 percent of children are low income. Students attending schools with a concentration of poverty receive less funding per pupil than other school districts. For example, 53 percent of African-American students attend schools with concentrations of poverty, while only 8 percent of White students attend these schools.

The academic achievement gap between Maryland students with means and our low-income students is stark. On the English 10 exam, 62 percent of economically advantaged students earned a passing score, while 28 percent of those students who are on free and reduced-price meals were deemed proficient. These statistics are stark. We know we have a problem. We have to deal with it.

The commission reported that these academic achievement disparities continued into college enrollment, with fewer students of color and low-income students enrolling in college than their higher income and White peers.

We will find similar numbers throughout our Nation. We need to do something about this. Concerns about the state of education in Maryland was not limited to student performance. The commission's interim report also found that students face a rotating carousel of teachers throughout their time in schools. With the average salary for teachers in Maryland approximately 25 percent less than professionals with comparable levels of education, it is difficult to attract to the profession. Sixty percent of our new teachers are recruited from outside our State each year. This is a common problem we have throughout the country.

Once those individuals arrive in the classroom, 47 percent will leave by the start of their third year. The turnover is tremendous. It is salary issues. It is working conditions. It makes it difficult to get the true professionalism and commitments that we need in education. This difficulty in recruiting individuals and the constant churn leaves Maryland students and local education systems facing shortages in critical need areas, such as special education, language, and the STEM fields.

In order to address these inequities in education, the commission unanimously agreed on a proposal with five transformative policy recommendations in their interim report that would provide significant, additional investments in Federal, State, and local funding and modify policies for Maryland's prekindergarten through 12th grade education system.

The five main policy recommendations would first invest in high-quality early childhood education and care through a significant expansion of full-day preschool, to be free for all low-income, 3- and 4-year-olds, so that children have the opportunity to begin kindergarten ready to learn.

Second is to invest in teachers and school leaders by elevating the standard and status of the teaching profession, including a performance-based career ladder and salaries comparable to other fields with similar educational requirements.

Third, it creates a world-class instructional system with an international benchmark curriculum that enables most students to achieve "college or career ready" status by the 10th grade and then pursue pathways to include early college, Advanced Placement courses, or a rigorous technical education leading to industry-recognized credentials and higher paid jobs.

Fourth, it provides support to students who need it the most, with broad and sustained support for schools serving high concentrations of poverty, with after-school and summer academic programs and student access to needed health and social services.

Finally, it ensures excellence for all through an accountability oversight board that has the authority to ensure that transformative education system recommendations are successfully implemented and produce the desired improvements in student achievement.

These reforms would be implemented over a 10-year period, creating a sustained and coordinated effort to transform Maryland's public education system into a world-class system, elevating the teaching profession, and eliminating educational inequities. An independent analysis conducted in November 2019 confirms that the cost to implement the commission's recommendations will pay for themselves shortly after the 10-year implementation period.

Last year, the Maryland General Assembly recognized that our children could not wait to implement the commission's recommendations and established the Blueprint for Maryland's Future to lay the groundwork for the implementation of the commission's recommendations.

Starting this year, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future is assisting low-income families' access to expanded services and early childhood education, including free prekindergarten for 3- and 4-year-olds from low-income families.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future is assisting in the recruitment of new teachers to the profession through increased teacher pay and career ladders for exiting teachers to help train the next generation. A newly established career readiness standard will allow Maryland high school students to succeed in dual-enrollment courses offered by local community colleges.

The "Blueprint" addresses Maryland's education formulas to better

target resources to students who need additional assistance, including children with disabilities, English learners, and students in schools with high concentration of poverty. This is all done while increasing accountability to ensure that the additional investments are properly implemented and help our students succeed.

That is the path that we are on. I agree with advocates and elected leaders who understand our kids cannot wait for adoption of these recommendations at some point in the future. We need to act now. We need to implement these recommendations now and view them as a national model for other States to aspire to. Without transformative change, we will continue to hope for significantly different results with only incremental changes, or we can be bold and change the future of our children and our country and every child with the high-quality education skills training that they need to be successful and climb out of poverty.

I reject the arguments from those who would claim that the recommendations are too costly to implement. Without the full implementation of the commission's recommendations, we are failing in our primary goal in government of providing a better future for our children, allowing them to slip behind their national and international peers.

These arguments also fail to see that the investments in our children can lead to a lifetime of reduced costs in public safety and healthcare costs, as children can grow and support themselves and their future families through the education they receive in public schools. These investments will pay back dividends in a stronger economy that will benefit all of us.

I believe we should not allow States and local communities to make these transformative changes on their own. The Federal Government should be a strong Federal partner in ensuring accountability and in addressing educational inequities for our children.

That is why I introduced the TRUE EQUITY Act. This legislation, which is purposely modeled after the commission's recommendation, establishes four new, supplemental Federal grant opportunities for State and local school districts that are committed to addressing educational inequities while holding States and local school districts accountable for failing to properly support their students.

In strengthening the Federal Government's commitment as a partner in education, the four new TRUE EQUITY grants would provide an additional \$1 of Federal funds for every \$2 of State and local funds that are committed to education beyond their fiscal year 2019 spending levels.

State and local school districts that receive grants would be required to meet a maintenance of effort to ensure that the State and local educational spending is maintained and would not

allow the Federal Government's funding to backfill reductions in State and local commitments to educational funding.

As a requirement to receiving one of the four new TRUE EQUITY grants, a State would be required to have an independent oversight board to ensure that the State and local districts would be meeting their State-designated educational equity goals, and the oversight board would have the ability to hold the State and local school districts accountable for not meeting their targeted goals.

These grants are flexible to allow local communities to meet their needs over a several-year period, whether it be through the establishment of a college and career readiness pathway to support a high school student's dual enrollment at a local community college and provide a jump-start on college; additional funding to expand the number of early learning hubs in the State—in Maryland, these are known as Judy Centers—or training for teachers on how to address the needs of our children with disabilities.

As Congress begins to look at the next reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, I urge my colleagues to listen to the voices of the Marylanders across our State who know that our kids can't wait for the implementation of these recommendations and support the TRUE EQUITY Act.

I congratulate the members of the commission who thoughtfully researched and crafted this national model for States to be able to see transformative change and raise their educational systems to that of a world-class school system. We owe our children nothing less than to provide them with the best possible outcome in our Nation's public schools.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 1506

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I call up my amendment, No. 1506, and I ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. PAUL] proposes an amendment numbered 1506.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To rescind unobligated balances for certain international programs to offset the amounts appropriated in this bill to respond to the coronavirus outbreak)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ RESCISSIONS.

(a) EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.—Notwithstanding any

other provision of law, all amounts made available for fiscal year 2020 for the East-West Center under title I of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2020 (division G of Public Law 116-94), the Inter-American Foundation under title III of such Act, and educational and cultural exchange programs under title I of such Act that remain unobligated as of the date of the enactment of this Act are rescinded.

(b) PROPORTIONAL RESCISSIONS OF OTHER UNOBLIGATED DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under paragraph (2), after rescinding the amounts required under subsection (a), the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall rescind, on a proportional basis, such amounts as may be necessary to fully offset (in conjunction with the rescissions under subsection (a)) the amounts appropriated by this Act from the unobligated amounts appropriated for fiscal year 2020 for—

(A) the Economic Support Fund under chapter 4 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2346 et seq.); and

(B) the United States Agency for International Development.

(2) EXCLUSIONS.—In making the rescissions required under paragraph (1), the Director shall not rescind any amounts appropriated for—

(A) global health programs under title III of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2020 (division G of Public Law 116-94); or

(B) assistance to Israel.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, my amendment would pay for the emergency funds for the coronavirus.

I think that we should not let fear or urgency cause us to lose our minds and cause us to act in an irresponsible fashion. I, for one, have looked at foreign aid over the years as welfare that we send to other countries that really is not particularly in our best interests anyway. If you follow foreign aid through the years, what you will find is that it goes from middle-class folks in rich countries to rich people in poor countries. Frankly, people enrich themselves at our expense. They steal our money. The Mubarak family in Egypt is now worth billions of dollars, which it skimmed off the top. The history of this throughout the Third World is legion and is well known.

My amendment would basically take the \$8 billion from the welfare we give to foreign countries in order to pay for this. I see no reason we shouldn't do this. I am not opposed to the emergency funding, but I think that the emergency funding should be gotten from elsewhere in the budget and that this is the responsible way to act.

Every day, people across the country are confronted with unexpected expenses. We budget and we plan, but things happen. When they do, we adjust and plan accordingly. Sometimes we confront an expense that is not only unexpected but is urgent, and that is where we find ourselves today. We want to respond and make sure we are providing resources to our medical professionals and researchers. That is important, and I fully support that, which is why we should use this moment to

ask ourselves whether it is really necessary to keep spending on wasteful things.

If we don't consider this now, when will we ever consider this?

We want an all-hands-on-deck response, so we should be cutting out waste and moving those resources to something that is of more immediate concern. So, if the coronavirus is of immediate concern—and I think it is—let's address that situation now, but let's do so by taking money from less urgent things and money that we are wasting overseas—money that is often stolen by Third-World dictators. That is exactly what I am proposing today.

We have the money. We don't need to borrow more money. We just have to start setting our own priorities. For example, we shouldn't spend another dollar in developing a foreign economy this year. That spending should be stopped, and the money should be spent here to buy supplies, to help expedite research, and to support our communities. The funds I am proposing to keep at home have been used abroad for all kinds of unnecessary and wasteful things. I will give you a few examples.

We send U.S. taxpayer dollars to fund kids from Pakistan to go to space camp in America. We spend money on combating student truancy in the Philippines. We have been funding the Peruvian Green New Deal. We actually send money to help deported illegal immigrants start up businesses in El Salvador. What business is it of the U.S. taxpayer to be funding small businesses in El Salvador for people who broke the law by trying to break into our country? It is insane. At this point in time, I think this money would be better spent on research on the coronavirus and on a response to this epidemic should it become worse in our country.

The list doesn't stop there. I don't know why we can't agree to spend this money on the coronavirus instead of spending it abroad. We spend over \$50 billion a year in Afghanistan—building their roads, building their schools, trying to create a nation where there really is no nation. We need to spend that money here at home. Besides, it is the law.

We have a law called pay-go, or pay as you go, which is supposed to require Congress to pay for new spending. It has been around for a couple of decades. Yet we have broken the law thousands of times. What do they do? They see something they want. You know, they are kids in a candy store. They want to spend. They want to give you, give you, give you free money, so they just ignore the law. So what happens every year is that they exceed the pay-as-you-go, and they don't do the thing they are supposed to do, which is to offset this with a spending cut. Then they just write a small, little note in there, reading they have agreed to ignore the pay-go rules again. That is what will happen in this case.

The other way they ignore the rules on pay-go is they declare things to be emergencies, so everything is an emergency. They say: Well, what would we do if we didn't have this—if it weren't an emergency?

We already spend billions of dollars and have spent billions of dollars over the years to prepare for epidemics. We fund the CDC, and we fund the NIH. There is a lot of money out there.

Once again, I am not against giving additional money, but we should just make a decision. We should be mature people and say we are not just going to print up the money or borrow it from China but are going to take it, maybe, from something less necessary.

When we don't want to pay for new spending, we just simply waive these rules on pay-go. We declare the spending to be emergency, and we get around the requirement. That is how we got a \$23 trillion debt. We actually borrow \$2 million every minute.

People say: Well, we have to do something. People are running around, acting crazy—we have to do something. Well, who is going to do something about the \$23 trillion debt?

Do we not have 5 minutes to take a vote? In 15 minutes, we will be taking this vote, and people could simply vote and say that we are not going to borrow more money and that we will take the money from somewhere else in the budget that is less pressing.

Mark my words—there is no fiscal responsibility up here among either party. It will be a small minority of us who will say that this funding should be offset by taking it from somewhere else in the budget.

In times of emergency, Congress scrambles to put together new spending, but we should be working just as hard to pay for the cost that comes with emergencies.

Which is a higher priority—spending millions of dollars to stabilize the supply chain of medical supplies and treatments here at home or spending millions on international arts festivals? Which is a higher priority—spending millions to train frontline medical professionals here at home on how to limit exposure to the coronavirus or spending millions of dollars, if not billions of dollars, paving roads in Afghanistan? My amendment gives us a chance to set priorities.

We can support our communities and give our medical system the resources it needs, and we can do it without adding to the debt. That is the responsible way. My amendment would do exactly that, and I encourage the other Senators to consider fiscal responsibility.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I know other Senators have already spoken on this, but I would hope Members would oppose the Paul amendment.

The amendment would cut, among other things, \$7.3 billion from the Department of State and the USAID. It

would decimate programs that fund the foreign policy priorities of both the administration and the Congress. A cut of that size would be about two-thirds of the total funding appropriated for these purposes, some of which has already been spent.

I remember when James Mattis was the Secretary of Defense. He is a man I admire for his work as a four-star general with the Marine Corps and as Defense Secretary. He is not a man who looked at the world or the needs of our military in an abstract fashion; he dealt with it every day. He came before our Committee on Appropriations and said: If you want to cut foreign aid, buy me more bullets.

He made it very clear that there are areas in the world where what we do keeps us from having to go to combat.

The Paul amendment would practically eliminate the remaining budget for programs to strengthen democracy, combat corruption, promote economic growth, improve water and sanitation, aid victims of war and natural disasters, and support our allies and partners in countless ways.

The reason the State Department and USAID need supplemental funds is that the resources provided in fiscal year 2020 are not sufficient to meet the unanticipated public health, economic, and humanitarian challenges presented by the coronavirus. Yet the Paul amendment would cut billions from the same accounts for which additional resources are needed.

The funding for the programs that would be cut by the Paul amendment is how we make our presence felt around the world. It actually totals less than 1 percent of the Federal budget.

Senators of both parties—of both parties—voted overwhelmingly to include this funding in the fiscal year 2020 State, Foreign Operations appropriations bill.

In case anybody has forgotten when that was, that was just 3 months ago.

The Paul amendment would also eliminate \$475 million that Congress enacted less than 3 months ago for educational and cultural exchanges, including \$160 million for the Fulbright Program—so no more Fulbright Program, no more International Visitors Program, no more exchange programs for young leaders in Africa, Southeast Asia, or Latin America. These programs enrich the lives of Americans and directly benefit the economies, in every State of the Union, and create lasting ties between U.S. and foreign communities, universities, and governments—but not if the Paul amendment passes.

The amendment would eliminate all funding for the Inter-American Foundation, which, with a budget of just \$37 million, supports hundreds of projects to combat poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean.

It would eliminate funding for the East-West Center, which has a long history of strengthening relations and building understanding between the

United States and the Asia/Pacific countries.

Both the Inter-American Foundation and the East-West Center were established by acts of Congress. It is in our national interest to fight poverty in Latin America and support engagement with countries in the Far East.

The coronavirus represents a serious public health threat. We have to respond now. We have to treat this as the emergency it is.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter from the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, addressed to Senator GRAHAM and myself—incidentally, they represent more than 500 U.S. business and nongovernmental organizations—opposing this amendment be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. GLOBAL LEADERSHIP
COALITION,
March 5, 2020.

Hon. LINDSEY GRAHAM,
Chairman, Subcommittee on State-Foreign Operations, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. PATRICK LEAHY,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on State-Foreign Operations, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRAHAM AND RANKING MEMBER LEAHY: On behalf of the more than 500 business and NGO members of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC), including business, military, and faith-based leaders in all 50 states, I write in strong opposition to an amendment proposed by Senator Rand Paul that would offset emergency funding to address the growing coronavirus threat by canceling over \$8 billion in congressionally approved funds for the International Affairs Budget.

If enacted, this amendment would cancel critical funding for State Department, USAID, and other development programs around the world, undermining our national security and economic interests and placing America's global leadership at risk. Cuts of this magnitude would have devastating consequences on our ability to confront unprecedented global challenges—including countering China's growing influence around the world, supporting partners in the fight against extremism, and addressing the impacts of the Venezuelan refugee crisis on key allies like Colombia.

There is a strong bipartisan legacy in the Senate of rejecting deep and dangerous cuts to America's development and diplomacy programs. I urge the Senate to once again take decisive action and reject Senator Paul's shortsighted amendment. Doing so will ensure that resources already approved by Congress can be fully deployed to support cost-effective programs that advance America's interests.

Thank you for your unwavering support of America's international affairs programs and your commitment to strengthening the critical resources needed to advance America's global leadership.

Sincerely,

LIZ SCHRAYER,
President & CEO, USGLC.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I do not see another Senator seeking recognition, so 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. GRAHAM. 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. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all debate time be considered expired.

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

MOTION TO TABLE

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I move to table the Paul amendment, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 81, nays 15, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 65 Leg.]

YEAS—81

Alexander	Gillibrand	Reed
Baldwin	Graham	Roberts
Barrasso	Grassley	Romney
Bennet	Harris	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hassan	Rounds
Blunt	Hawley	Rubio
Booker	Heinrich	Sasse
Boozman	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Hoeven	Schumer
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cantwell	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Capito	Jones	Shaheen
Cardin	Kaine	Shelby
Carper	King	Sinema
Casey	Klobuchar	Smith
Cassidy	Leahy	Stabenow
Collins	Manchin	Sullivan
Coons	McConnell	Tester
Cornyn	McSally	Thune
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Tillis
Cotton	Merkley	Udall
Cramer	Moran	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	Wicker
Fischer	Peters	Wyden
Gardner	Portman	Young

NAYS—15

Blackburn	Ernst	Loeffler
Braun	Johnson	Paul
Crapo	Kennedy	Perdue
Cruz	Lankford	Risch
Daines	Lee	Toomey

CHANGE OF VOTE

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I request unanimous consent that I be permitted to change my vote on the rollcall vote earlier today. The vote was No. 65. I voted no. It was my intention to vote aye. It will not affect the outcome.

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

(The foregoing tally has been changed to reflect the above order.)

NOT VOTING—4

Enzi	Sanders
Markey	Warren

The motion to table was agreed to; the amendment was tabled.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 1:45 p.m. shall be equally divided between the leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I come to the floor to speak about the ongoing crisis of the novel coronavirus outbreak and to urge all of us to pass this supplemental as quickly as possible.

As of this morning, there are 163 confirmed cases in 17 States across the country, but no State has been more hard hit than the State of Washington.

We now have 39 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and more than 230 people under public health monitoring. We have lost 10 of our citizens. Our thoughts and prayers are with those families who have lost loved ones, and there are still families who have loved ones in nursing homes and who are trying to make sure they get the appropriate care in this ongoing crisis.

I would also like to thank the workers who are on the frontlines of this healthcare crisis and are doing everything they can to help keep our citizens safe.

What is clear in this supplemental is that we need more resources for testing. The testing capabilities will help our communities understand the community transfer of this virus and what else we need to do to help stop its spread.

Some of the funding in this supplemental can be helpful for our smaller public labs to do more testing to help our public health officials respond to this crisis, and, as I urged yesterday, for the CDC and others to make it clear through our public health sites exactly how the public can go about getting access to testing.

This is so critical because I know there are people in the State of Washington who feel ill, who feel they might be subject to this coronavirus and aren't getting tested. We want to make sure the public clearly understands what their paths are for getting those tests, and we want to make sure that every lab—commercial and academic—in the United States is getting prepared to help us in the advent of the spread of this virus. Why? Because helping to identify these early cases is what will help us be successful in understanding these patterns and further the community separations that we need to do.

Why is this so important? Well, today in the State of Washington, they are taking major steps. Major employers are encouraging their employees, if possible, to work from home. These are companies like Microsoft and Facebook and Amazon—major employers.

We have 23 schools that have closed and 2 school districts that are entirely shut down. Why are they doing this? Because they are taking precautions for people who have been exposed to the coronavirus in those schools, and they are doing everything they can to make sure that they respond correctly.

In addition, King County has recommended that anyone over the age of 60, anyone with a preexisting medical condition, or anyone who is pregnant should avoid public places and gatherings as much as possible.

We are taking all these steps now because we are at the epicenter of this crisis, but I want people to know that there are other things that other States can be doing to learn from what we have done in Washington.

The fact is that we had a flu lab that actually was a collaboration among our academic and scientific and health communities to get people who thought they simply had the flu to also be tested, and we found cases of the coronavirus. That actually is something you have to set up and get permission for. I hope that every State will follow suit and set up such a cohort of people working together to share that information so that we can help prevent the spread.

Washington State will receive \$11.5 million in funding to help the Department of Health respond to this crisis. I know the Vice President is visiting our Governor in Olympia, WA, today. I hope these funds in this bill we are passing today will increase access for public lab testing, help pay for isolation and quarantine, help pay for sanitizing in public areas, better track the areas and those who might come into contact with it, help labs that are trying to identify hot spots, and limit exposure.

As part of this package, Washington State will also be helped with reimbursements since the outbreak of this virus—and I can tell you that they are many—and to help us push through the protocols that would help us establish better responses.

Yesterday, we had a hearing in the Aviation Subcommittee to talk about what is needed for an aviation protocol. I know that some airlines in our State are doing everything possible to clean planes on every turn of the trip and to do deep cleaning. They are communicating—and we have encouraged them to communicate more—with their passengers exactly what they are doing to help with the mitigation of this virus. But that is not a substitute for the Department of Transportation, federally, and the CDC, collaboratively, to work in giving guidance to airlines on what standards they should be meeting to help mitigate the spread of this virus.

My colleagues and I are calling on them to do that, not simply to think of this as other agencies' responsibilities but to work collaboratively to get this done.

I want to thank the Appropriations Committee for getting this legislation

to us today and all of our colleagues who have worked so quickly on making it happen. I can tell you that we need these funds; we need them now; and we need other States to heed the early testing that would have been helpful in our State and now may be helpful in yours.

Let's get as aggressive about testing as possible. Let's get aggressive about sharing information about the flu and tracking this virus. Let's get aggressive about trying to mitigate the impacts of this deadly disease.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

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

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

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, a new study showed that from the years 2007 to 2018, prices for, actually, hundreds of drugs rose many times—many times faster than the rate of inflation. List prices on 602 medicines rose by 159 percent. That would average out to 9 percent annually. After discounts and rebates, net prices increased by 60 percent or 4.5 percent annually. That is 3.5 times the rate of inflation.

These are drugs for multiple sclerosis, cholesterol, rheumatoid arthritis, chemotherapy, diabetes, and many other debilitating and life-threatening conditions. Put into real terms, these price increases mean that if one of these drugs cost \$100 a month in 2007, that same drug would cost \$259 in 2018.

Meanwhile, you have to consider the working American. Wages for the average American over the same time period increased about 30 percent in the private sector. That means wage growth is about half the rate of the growth of prescription drug prices, even after the rebates and even after the discounts.

For many, increased drug costs are wiping out progress that these workers are making in their wages. Some families are even going backward financially after paying for their prescriptions. This doesn't take into account at all the many other increases in the cost of living from college to housing, to insurance.

Now, we Americans are surely fortunate, aren't we, to see the significant wage growth that we have had in this country for our workers under President Trump—great progress.

The President and Republicans in Congress can rightly take credit for the country's booming economy, but all that wage growth doesn't mean much—or at least as much—if it is spent on the same prescription drug refills every month. That is something that ought to concern every Member of this Congress, and for most, I am sure

it does because we hear about it constantly from our constituents. In fact, during this election season, polls show that it is one of the top three or four issues that are most on people's minds.

Let me be clear. These price hikes aren't because the medicines got better or there was a significant increase in research and development. No, this is because the pharmaceutical companies could do it, and in doing it, they could get away with it because, in many cases, consumers don't have a choice; consumers don't have options or alternatives. That is because we don't have a healthy marketplace that drives costs down for pharmaceuticals.

Right now, pharmaceutical companies can essentially charge Medicare whatever they want, and taxpayers don't have much recourse. Right now, every single working American who pays Federal taxes is subsidizing Big Pharma's record profits through the drugs that the Federal Government pays for through various programs like Medicare and Medicaid.

Now, there has to be a solution for this situation, and Ranking Member WYDEN and I are working to put some common sense back into this whole system of buying pills. In the Finance Committee, we have passed bipartisan legislation to put an end to unlimited corporate welfare for Big Pharma. The vote of that bill out of committee was 19 to 9—a bipartisan effort.

We are closer than ever to lowering drug prices for tens of millions of Americans, and these Americans have been crying for this help from Congress for quite a few years. But here we are. Big Pharma and its paid allies are out in force trying to kill any reforms that might endanger their profit margins. They are using scare tactics, deploying terms like "socialism" and "price controls," as if these subsidies to Big Pharma are not a form of socialism.

I have been around long enough to recognize the political games that are being played now. You see it quite regularly on the television advertisements. So let's set the record straight. The last thing Big Pharma wants is a free market. After all, these were the same folks who loved ObamaCare so much because they knew it mandated another revenue stream for their products. Now, we all know how ObamaCare has turned out. Yet they made a deal with the White House to back that bill.

Now, Big Pharma is also warning that any reforms would hurt research and development. In fact, my bipartisan legislation with Senator WYDEN would result in less socialism, a more competitive marketplace, and wouldn't put a damper on innovation. That is according to something that I call "God" around here—the independent Congressional Budget Office. These are professional people making these judgments. They judge most all of our legislation, particularly if there is a monetary cost to it.

For those who may not believe a politician, let me point to the work, then,

that the professionals at CBO have done on Grassley-Wyden:

First, the updated Grassley-Wyden bill will save more than \$80 billion and result in no fewer cures.

No. 2, CBO says it will reduce patient out-of-pocket spending in Part D of Medicare by around \$50 billion.

No. 3, CBO says it will reduce premiums by about \$1 billion for tens of millions of seniors and Americans with disabilities on Medicare.

No. 4, CBO says that is all on top of out-of-pocket expenses that we put a cap on and an end to the dreaded doughnut hole that has been part of Part D since 2003.

No. 5, we have also, according to the Congressional Budget Office, created a new way to spread out payments for those out-of-pocket expenses so that paying the bills every month becomes a bit easier for those on fixed incomes.

No. 6 and lastly, according to the Congressional Budget Office, the bipartisan Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act—that is the title of our bill—would protect taxpayers from being put on the hook for unlimited price hikes that have no basis in a functioning free market.

So, without reforms, big pharmaceutical companies will continue to receive tens of billions of dollars in excess taxpayer subsidies, and they will also have no incentive to keep prices from rising many times faster than inflation.

Currently, prescription drug manufacturers can charge Medicare more and more every year, and they do. When the government is paying and you have entitlement programs, taxpayers are forced to foot the bill. So Grassley-Wyden enacts accountability and ends corporate welfare without harming medical innovations.

Now, Senator WYDEN and I are looking forward to reintroducing our bipartisan bill very soon. So far, a dozen Senate Republicans have announced publicly that they support this bipartisan bill. Others will announce their support in the coming days, and a dozen more Republican Senators have indicated to me that Grassley-Wyden is going in the right direction, implying that they would vote for it on the Senate floor. So I am optimistic that we will continue to gain support as Senators learn more.

I was really pleased with President Trump announcing his willingness to sign a bill in his State of the Union message. The next morning, Vice President PENCE was on cable TV saying that he supported Grassley-Wyden. Secretary Azar has endorsed the bill. Not only that, but Secretary Azar and a gang of people in domestic policy at the White House have been working with us on this legislation, even prior to its coming out of committee.

So, with all of this work and with all of this support—and with the interest on the part of the voters as being one of the three or four most prominent issues that will determine how people

vote—it seems to me it deserves a vote on the Senate floor and very soon. So I am here today to urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, if they have any questions about this bill, to visit with me about it and learn how it will help all of our constituents.

The six points I made about the bill based upon what the Congressional Budget Office said about it isn't all that that bill does. There is a lot more to it.

Maybe I had better back up. I have read enough comments of my colleagues—colleagues I haven't even talked to—that said what an important issue this is. So, in one way or another, without even signing on to this bill, without even being on the Finance Committee, it seems like we have all pledged to lower prescription drug prices. So I think we should follow through on that pledge.

I yield the floor.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO RONNIE ANDERSON

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I want to spend a few minutes talking about a friend of mine from Louisiana who is a fine American and a fine Louisianian, and he is retiring. His name is Ronnie Anderson.

I want to celebrate his 51 years of service. That number is correct. I know some of our pages here can't imagine someone being in a single job for 51 years, but Ronnie has served 51 years, and he has devoted those years, in large part, in service to our State's Farm Bureau.

He has led the Louisiana Farm Bureau to greater influence, to growing membership, and that is not a small feat, because America was born on a farm. In some respects, Louisiana was born on a farm, and farming is, as you well know, Madam President, a challenging yet very rewarding vocation and profession.

For 31 of the last 31 elections, the Louisiana Farm Bureau members have chosen Ronnie as their president. So he has won 31 elections in a row by our farmers in Louisiana, which is almost as good as the President's electoral record.

Farmers from East Carroll, in my State, to Beauregard Parishes and elsewhere in between have come to trust Ronnie as someone who knows them, who cares about them, who cares about their farms, and who was willing to rack up 71,000 miles driving his truck across the State of Louisiana in an effort to win their confidence, as Ronnie did repeatedly.

Ronnie spent most of his 71 years on this Earth working alongside the farmers whom he represents. He grew up

caring for dairy cows in East Feliciana Parish. In Louisiana, as you may know, we call our counties parishes.

Along with Ronnie's wife, Vivian, Ronnie still produces horses, hay, beef cattle, and timber. All the while he was doing this, he helped widen the arms of the Louisiana Farm Bureau and double its membership to nearly 150,000 women and men over the course of Ronnie's three decades as the organization's president.

Louisiana is a very diverse agricultural State, where each region is distinct, and Ronnie has represented every nook and every cranny of our farming and ranching community.

I am not alone in standing in awe of Ronnie Anderson's service. I am in awe, and I wish Ronnie and Vivian, in their next chapter, the chance to enjoy life. I know they have both enjoyed the 51 years of service to the Farm Bureau, but now will enjoy life in a different way.

I wanted to come here today and celebrate Ronnie's service and that of Vivian's, his life partner, as well.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

H.R. 6074

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, we face a serious global crisis today with the spread of the coronavirus. We all know that. The American people, I believe, expect us here in the U.S. Senate to set aside politics and set into motion a swift and sweeping response to this danger. Yesterday was a big step in that direction.

I and Vice Chairman LEAHY, who is on the floor here with me, in conjunction with the leaders on both sides and with our House counterparts, introduced a comprehensive plan that provides our experts and agencies on the frontlines with the resources they tell us they need to combat this crisis.

The package we introduced includes \$7.8 billion in discretionary appropriations for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, the Food and Drug Administration, the State Department, the USAID, and the Small Business Administration. The package also authorizes an additional \$500 million in mandatory spending for telehealth through Medicare. Combined, this emergency supplemental provides \$8.3 billion in resources to attack the crisis at the local, State, Federal, and international levels.

In situations like this, I believe no expense should be spared to protect the American people, and in crafting this package, none was. It is an aggressive plan, a vigorous plan, that has received an overwhelming positive reaction in the House and in the marketplace. It is

the Senate's responsibility today to keep the momentum going.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes and demonstrate to the American people that we here in the Senate are unified and have their backs on this crisis.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I agree with what Chairman SHELBY has said. We have tried to set an example. The two of us are from two different parties, from two different parts of the country and, I think it is fair to say, have two different political philosophies. Yet we have come together on this, as we have on so many other issues on appropriations, to show, as an example to our colleagues, what we think is best on this bill.

This week, Congress showed strong, decisive leadership in addressing the novel coronavirus. As appropriators of both parties often do, and as Members of Congress have proven still capable of doing even in the most partisan of times, we have put our labels aside and have come together for the American people.

I was concerned that this was something the President was not doing. We saw the President spread misinformation on national television that downplayed the potential risk to the American people. I was concerned that he was worried more about the market impacts than about human lives. His administration's initial proposal for \$1.25 billion of new spending, plus the authority to divert \$1.25 billion from such things as Ebola prevention and low-income heating assistance, was reckless and devoid of substance.

Those in the administration sought vague transfer authorities to allow them to move other money around in unidentified ways. It showed how little thought was given to what was needed and to how much was needed. I thought it was the latest attempt to undermine Congress's power of the purse—the power of the purse that Republicans and Democrats have always tried to protect.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD at the end of my remarks a letter from Russell T. Vought, Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

I asked to submit the acting OMB Director's request letter as an example of what not to do in an emerging crisis.

Fortunately, there are those who remain in our government who are very forthcoming with me and with our bipartisan staff members—my staff and Senator SHELBY's staff—about the real needs of confronting the coronavirus, needs that are based on facts and science. I do thank the staffs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Financial Resources. Their help was invaluable in producing in only 9 days the package we are going

to be voting on today. During those 9 days, there was a lot of evening and weekend work by our staffs and by the Senators involved. We did it in 9 days because of the emergency, and their help was invaluable.

The crisis is real. Worldwide, there are now 92,000 confirmed cases and 3,200 confirmed deaths. Here in our country, that number is rising as there have been more than 150 confirmed cases and 11 deaths. The CDC has told us that the public health system will be able to test up to 75,000 people by the end of the week and that we should expect the number of cases here to rise. So I strongly support this \$7.8 billion package and the other money that is available.

This package is going to provide nearly \$1 billion directly to State, local, and Tribal governments to support public health preparedness and response; over \$3 billion in the research and development of vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics; nearly \$1 billion for healthcare preparedness, pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, and community health; \$1.25 billion to support our needed response overseas; \$7 billion in low-interest loans for small businesses; and nearly \$500 million to enhance the availability of telehealth services across the country. This is, certainly, something very important to those who might have rural areas in their States, and, frankly, we all do.

The American people are looking for leadership, and they want assurance that their government is up to the task of protecting their health and safety. I think we have to provide this leadership.

I am pleased that Congress included language in the bill—supported by both Republicans and Democrats—that specifies that the funds can only be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus. If there is a cynical effort, for any reason, by the President to shift funds from the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or the Public Health Social Services Emergency Fund, which are the agencies at the epicenter of this crisis—to divert funds, for example, to activities along the southwest border—it will violate the law.

As I have said several times on this floor, I thank Chairman SHELBY and his staff, as well as the majority and Democratic leaders, for their cooperation.

I will submit a list of committee staffers who worked through weekends and late into the nights to make this possible. It is a long list, but it shows some of the most professional people we have working in the Senate. I know that Senator SHELBY has a similar list from his office.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the list of the committee staffers' names.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Charles Kieffer, Chanda Betourney, Jessica Berry, Jay Tilton, Hannah Chauvin, Shannon Hines, Jonathan Graffeo, David Adkins, Margaret Pritchard, Dianne Nellor, Morgan Ulmer, Patrick Carroll, Ellen Murray, Reeves Hart, Andrew Newton, Alex Keenan, Kelly Brown, Meghan Mott, Kathryn Toomajian, Laura Friedel, Jeff Reczek, Tim Rieser, Alex Carnes, Kali Farahmand, Paul Grove, Katherine Jackson, and Adam Yezerski.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET,

Washington, DC, February 24, 2020.

Hon. MICHAEL R. PENCE,
President of the Senate, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: In late December 2019, China identified a novel coronavirus which was causing human-to-human transmission and has subsequently been named COVID-19. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a public health emergency of international concern due to widespread transmission of the virus. As of February 23, 2020, there are 78,811 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in approximately 30 countries worldwide; the total number of COVID-19 related deaths is now over 2,500 people, the majority of which are in China. In the United States, there have been 14 confirmed cases of COVID-19 presenting in seven states (not including 39 persons repatriated to the United States who have tested positive).

The President's priority is protecting the homeland, and the Administration is working aggressively to minimize the risk of the virus spreading in the United States. The President has created a Coronavirus Task Force to direct the U.S. response. This Task Force is led by the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) and is composed of subject matter experts from across Government, including some of the Nation's foremost experts on infectious diseases. On January 31, 2020, the Secretary of HHS declared a public health emergency. HHS has tapped into the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Infectious Diseases Rapid Response Reserve Fund to help combat the virus. In addition, fiscal year (FY) 2020 funds are being re-prioritized across HHS as necessary to address the virus.

The Government has taken unprecedented steps to minimize the risk of travelers spreading COVID-19 to the United States. The President suspended entry into the United States of certain foreign nationals who have recently traveled to China and who pose a risk of transmitting the virus and directed inbound flights from China to 11 airports where enhanced screening now takes place.

The Government has conducted numerous charter flights to evacuate American citizens from Wuhan, in the Hubei Province, China and the cruise ship *Diamond Princess* back to the United States. All passengers were screened for symptoms before the flights, and medical professionals continue to monitor the health of all returning passengers.

At the direction of the President and under the auspices of the Task Force, several Federal agencies are contributing significant resources and personnel to support the domestic and international response. To this point, no agency has been inhibited in response efforts due to resources or authorities. However, much is still unknown about this virus and the disease it causes. The Administration believes additional Federal resources are necessary to take steps to prepare for a potential worsening of the situation in the United States, and requests an appropriation of \$1.25 billion of emergency funding in the

Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund at HHS to continue supporting critical response and preparedness activities. In addition, the Administration is requesting that the Congress permit the \$535 million in emergency supplemental funding appropriated in the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2020, to the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund at HHS for the prevention and treatment of Ebola to be used for COVID-19 response. Tremendous progress has been made on Ebola and the current national response priority should be COVID-19. These two proposals would make \$1.8 billion in new resources available for the current response.

This funding would support all aspects of the U.S. response, including: public health preparedness and response efforts; public health surveillance, epidemiology, laboratory testing, and quarantining costs; advanced research and development of new vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics; advanced manufacturing enhancements; and the Strategic National Stockpile. Funds would also be made available, as necessary, to affected States that are making contributions to the current national response.

Because this funding arises from an unforeseen, unanticipated event and is necessary for the protection of human life, these supplemental resources should be designated as emergency funding. In addition to these emergency supplemental appropriations, the Administration is seeking enhanced authorities to use existing resources most effectively and to create additional flexibility for directing resources toward the response. These flexibilities include the ability for HHS to transfer funds to CDC, the National Institutes of Health, the Food and Drug Administration, the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, and other components as necessary to carry out further response activities. This also includes enhanced transfer authority for the Secretary for the COVID-19 response, similar to the authority already provided for the HHS Refugee and Entrant Assistance account. In addition, the Administration seeks an increase of the authorized funding level, to \$10 million, for the repatriation program within the Administration for Children and Families for potential or future response activities.

With the appropriation of new emergency funding, as well as the repurposing of FY 2020 Ebola resources, reprioritization of other FY 2020 funding across HHS, and contributions from other Government agencies, across the Government we expect to allocate at least \$2.5 billion in total resources for COVID-19 response efforts.

Thank you for your consideration of these funding needs. I urge the Congress to take swift action to provide the additional funding requested to support the United States response to COVID-19. I stand ready to work with you to achieve this goal.

Sincerely,

RUSSELL T. VOUGHT,
Acting Director.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote that is scheduled to begin at 1:45 p.m. begin immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 66 Leg.]

YEAS—96

Alexander	Gardner	Perdue
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Bennet	Grassley	Reed
Blackburn	Harris	Risch
Blumenthal	Hassan	Roberts
Blunt	Hawley	Romney
Booker	Heinrich	Rosen
Boozman	Hirono	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Burr	Inhofe	Schatz
Cantwell	Johnson	Schumer
Capito	Jones	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Carper	Kennedy	Shaheen
Casey	King	Shelby
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Sinema
Collins	Lankford	Smith
Coons	Leahy	Stabenow
Cornyn	Lee	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Loeffler	Tester
Cotton	Manchin	Thune
Cramer	Markey	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Toomey
Cruz	McSally	Udall
Daines	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Moran	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden
Fischer	Murray	Young

NAYS—1

Paul

NOT VOTING—3

Enzi Sanders Warren

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 96, the nays are 1.

The 60-vote threshold, having been achieved, the bill was passed.

The bill (H.R. 6074) was passed.

ADVANCED GEOTHERMAL INNOVATION LEADERSHIP ACT OF 2019—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

AMENDMENT NO. 1419 WITHDRAWN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I withdraw amendment No. 1419.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The amendment is withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

AMENDMENT NO. 1407, AS MODIFIED

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I modify the substitute amendment No.

1407, with the changes at the desk. For the information of the Senate, this modification includes, among other things, acceptance of amendment No. 1419 offered by the Senator from Kentucky, Mr. McCONNELL, for the Senator from Iowa, Ms. ERNST.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “American Energy Innovation Act of 2020”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Definitions.

TITLE I—INNOVATION

Subtitle A—Efficiency

PART I—ENERGY SAVINGS AND INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS

SUBPART A—BUILDINGS

CHAPTER 1—BUILDING EFFICIENCY

Sec. 1001. Commercial building energy consumption information sharing.

Sec. 1002. Energy efficiency materials pilot program.

Sec. 1003. Coordination of energy retrofitting assistance for schools.

Sec. 1004. Grants for energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy improvements at public school facilities.

Sec. 1005. Smart Building Acceleration.

CHAPTER 2—WORKER TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Sec. 1011. Building training and assessment centers.

Sec. 1012. Career skills training.

SUBPART B—INDUSTRIAL EFFICIENCY AND COMPETITIVENESS

Sec. 1021. Purposes.

Sec. 1022. Future of Industry program and industrial research and assessment centers.

Sec. 1023. CHP Technical Assistance Partnership Program.

Sec. 1024. Sustainable manufacturing initiative.

Sec. 1025. High efficiency gas turbines.

Sec. 1026. Conforming amendments.

SUBPART C—FEDERAL AGENCY ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Sec. 1031. Energy and water performance requirements for Federal buildings.

Sec. 1032. Federal Energy Management Program.

Sec. 1033. Use of energy and water efficiency measures in Federal buildings.

Sec. 1034. Federal building energy efficiency performance standards; certification system and level for green buildings.

Sec. 1035. Energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies.

Sec. 1036. High-performance green Federal buildings.

Sec. 1037. Energy efficient data centers.

SUBPART D—REBATES AND CERTIFICATIONS

Sec. 1041. Third-Party Certification Under Energy Star Program.

Sec. 1042. Extended Product System Rebate Program.

Sec. 1043. Energy Efficient Transformer Rebate Program.