

rights. If you have any doubt about that, just look at the rest of the modern world. Every constitution written around the globe since World War II recognizes the equal stature of men and women. Ours does not. That is shameful.

Among those who are hesitant to support the ERA, one of their most common arguments is that it is not necessary. People argue that women already enjoy equal rights and protections in our society, so what is the need to write it down? To them, I say think again. Although the wage gap between men and women has narrowed over time, it still exists today. In 2019, women earned only 79 percent as much as their male counterparts for similar work. This disparity is even worse for women of color. It affects women their entire lives, and it affects their retirements. Recent data show that women over 65 are twice as likely as men to live below the poverty line. We owe it to America's women—to our mothers, daughters, sisters, friends, and selves—to remedy this societal failure.

Furthermore, as it stands, women in the United States have no Federal recourse for gender-based violence. Because of that, the courts have allowed police officers to refuse to defend victims of domestic abuse and have even struck down the protections offered by the Violence Against Women Act. The Equal Rights Amendment would require the Federal Government to prohibit and penalize this type of discrimination.

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg once said that, if she could choose an amendment to add to the Constitution, it would be the Equal Rights Amendment because she would like her granddaughters, when they pick up the Constitution, to see that notion—that women and men are persons of equal stature—as being a basic principle of our society. As a grandfather of two granddaughters myself, I couldn't agree more. I want them to know that, in America, they will enjoy the same protections and opportunities as anyone else.

I want every young person to grow up understanding that her dreams are within reach, that her autonomy is respected, and that her life is significant. In order to make that a reality, women need more than the right to vote, as fundamental as that is; they need a promise that they will be free from all forms of discrimination and injustice. That is why men, women, Republicans, and Democrats must come together in order to correct that silence in our Constitution—a silence that speaks volumes. We must all unite to support the Equal Rights Amendment.

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

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

#### HONORING OFFICER BRENT SCRIMSHIRE

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise to honor Hot Springs Police Officer First Class Brent Scrimshire, who was killed in the line of duty on Tuesday, March 10.

A native of Malvern, AR, Brent Scrimshire graduated from Malvern High School and Henderson State University.

Officer Scrimshire was an exemplary member of law enforcement. He had served on the Hot Springs police force for a number of years and was recognized as the department's Employee of the Quarter just recently in acknowledgment of his unique dedication, work ethic, and professionalism.

Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge also named him the Southwest Region Officer of the Year in 2016, which, according to media reports, he earned in part because of his lifesaving action when he helped to control the bleeding of a stabbing victim.

"Scrim" was known for treating his brothers in blue, as well as those he encountered while doing his job, with kindness and dignity. He also enjoyed being outdoors, hunting and fishing.

Officer Scrimshire deeply loved his wife and two children, who are now left behind to go through life without the devoted husband and dad they adored.

Our hearts break for them, the rest of his family and friends, and his entire family at the Hot Springs Police Department. His death is a tragic reminder of the risks our law enforcement officials face each time they put on the uniform.

I send my deepest condolences to Officer Scrimshire's loved ones. We honor his service and his sacrifice and pray all those fortunate enough to have known him will find comfort in his legacy and in the outpouring of love and support from so many.

On behalf of all Arkansans, we celebrate Officer Scrimshire's life and example of courageous, willing, and selfless public service. May he rest in peace.

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. CORNYN. 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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, earlier today, as the Senate knows now, Leader MCCONNELL announced that we would cancel our State work period so we could continue to work on legislation here in Washington, DC, to help families and our communities get

through the economic effect of the coronavirus's spread. I am glad he made that decision, and I look forward to continuing to work on those issues for the benefit of our constituents and the Nation.

This situation calls for an all-of-government response, and it will allow us additional time to hammer out a bipartisan agreement to respond to the ripple effect that this outbreak is having in Texas and across the country.

As we continue our discussions on this legislation, I would just urge my colleagues that this is a time to put partisanship aside and stop playing politics, if there ever was one.

There is actually precedent for that. At the height of the Ebola crisis in 2014, Republicans in the Senate worked with our Democratic colleagues and President Obama to ensure we were ready to treat Texans and other Americans who needed care from that particular disease.

We need to come together to do the same now, not to use the opportunity to attack or score political points or to try to damage our opponents. Unfortunately, that seems to be the first impulse of some of our friends across the Capitol Chamber.

Most of the public concern is focused on the elderly, on cruise ship travelers, and those with underlying medical conditions, but we need to think of every family, every college student, and to make sure that everyone who is worrying about how to make ends meet during this particular crisis because they had to stay home and miss work has their concerns addressed as well. This virus could disrupt everyone's daily routine in one way or the other, and as we have seen from the departure of some of our colleagues for self-quarantining, we are truly in this together.

I am glad we will be staying in session to try to bring as much relief and reassurance as we can in this uncertain time, and I look forward to all of us, Republicans and Democrats, the House and the Senate and the White House working together to get every American ready for what is to come.

It is not just the Senate that is altering its plans due to the coronavirus. Across the country, serious measures are taking place out of an abundance of caution to keep the American people safe. Some schools are choosing to close their doors, nursing homes are barring visitors, and major events like South by Southwest in Austin are canceling.

On the global scale, we are seeing an unprecedented action, including all of Italy—some 60 million people—going on a complete lockdown.

For many Americans, it seems like this public health crisis has escalated incredibly quickly. We went from never having heard of this new virus to constant news coverage about its growing reach within a matter of weeks.