

leader, the Republican leader, has a plan, please share it with us too. All of us are waiting and anxious to know what our circumstances will be for the days ahead.

I want to stay here and get the work done, but let's do it in an orderly, safe, and nonrisky way. Let's try to abide by the same guidelines we are preaching to the rest of America. Let's use new technology. Let's use our best thinking and come up with bipartisan answers. That, to me, is the way to manage the Senate in the midst of this national emergency.

We shouldn't be returning, as we have this week, and facing situations like last night where our vote was not even necessary. Many of us came here ready to vote and found that there had been an agreement that made such a vote unnecessary.

It is time for a greater spirit of cooperation and communication. Just to have the Republican side come up with their list and we come up with ours, without dialogue, doesn't lead us to where we need to be. Let's have that dialogue and do it in a safe and thoughtful way.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, our country is facing an unprecedented public health emergency with severe and potentially long-lasting economic consequences. As COVID-19 spreads, our local health officials and health experts tell us we are woefully unprepared for what is about to hit us. Public health infrastructure, like hospital beds and masks and ventilators, must be produced and procured. Testing is still not at its proper capacity. The resulting economic downturn from this virus is already impacting millions of American families, workers, and businesses—small, medium, large, alike.

First, on a personal note, please, Americans, take care of yourselves. Avoid unnecessary contact, even though I know so many of the meetings and gatherings and celebrations that we have planned must be postponed. It is painful but not as painful as the continuing spread of this awful virus.

And a little advice—this is not universal, but I have heard this from a number of medical people whom I trust: Take your temperature in the

morning and in the evening. It is a good way to check whether you have this illness and it is progressing within you. Not all experts agree with that, but many do. In my view, it can't hurt. It is something I am doing. I am urging my family to do it, and I am urging my staff to do it.

Our response in the Senate and in Congress—the response to the coronavirus—will require a massive mobilization of public resources—Federal, State, and local—as we have marshaled before only in wartime. It is going to require Congress to work in a bipartisan way and with uncommon speed. And the American people, too, must pull together and sacrifice in ways small and large their normal way of life in an effort to combat this disease and limit its spread. All hands must be on deck because the task before us is daunting and may yet eclipse the pain felt by workers and families during the great recession—at least for many things.

The first order of business here in the Senate is to take up and pass the recent House bill and do it today. It will provide free coronavirus testing. That is essential. It would extend paid sick leave. It would give food assistance, Medicaid reimbursement, and expanded unemployment insurance.

I understand that some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle might want to amend the legislation or have it written differently if they were the ones putting it together. But I remind them that Leader MCCONNELL said that he would defer the agreement between the Speaker of the House and Secretary Mnuchin. The President has said he will sign this bill if the Senate passes it. If we change the bill, it will go back to the House and be delayed and delay the aid it contains for American families coping with the impact of the virus.

Please, my colleagues, we will have other opportunities to legislate, and there will be a great need for them, but let's move this now. Let's move this now. I believe our side of the aisle will clear this. I hope the other side will, and it will be on the President's desk today. Let's hope, and let's not delay any longer.

But there is much more to be done. Once this legislation is sent to the President's desk—COVID 2—our work will not be over, not even close. We must soon move to other very necessary measures to address the coronavirus and its widening impact on the health and well-being of the American people.

Today, I am presenting a series of proposals to congressional appropriators that would provide initial infusion of at least \$750 billion. Our proposal is big, it is bold, but it is also targeted. It focuses on those Americans in the parts of the health sector and the economy most in need now: hospitals and treatment, unemployment insurance and Medicaid, loan forbearance and aid for small business, childcare,

and senior citizens. It focuses on those who need help—those who don't have an income because they have lost their job temporarily; those who need help with senior citizens, with children who are not in school; hospitals that are short of equipment and maybe personnel. That is the immediate focus. That is what we must do right now. We must focus on those who need help immediately and do it in a way that deals with the structural problems in the country that have made the attack of this virus more virulent, more harmful, and worse.

By contrast, it is reported that the administration is proposing a massive Federal bailout of industry and a payroll tax cut. If we are going to follow up the House bill with another major economic stimulus package, which we must, our major focus cannot be based on bailing out airlines, cruises, and other industries. We must first prioritize economic solutions that are focused on workers and their families, solutions that would allow us to fix our broken unemployment system; rebuild our public health system, which is overburdened; save small and medium-sized American businesses that have a cash crunch and will go out of business, even though they were healthy a month ago, because no one is buying their products or using their services.

Let's remember—corporations are not people. People are people. And when it comes to this cascading crisis, we should help our fellow Americans first, even as we plan and execute policies that protect our economy. The administration's proposal, if that is the sum of it—a massive bailout of industry and a payroll tax cut—doesn't do that. It doesn't target the people who most need the help. Any package we are going to do here, which must be passed in a bipartisan way, must contain large elements of what I am talking about and maybe other things as well that help the people who are in need.

I will be sending my proposal and a PowerPoint slide to every one of my colleagues shortly, and I hope they will understand the need for it. I have consulted with large numbers in our caucus, and we have broad support for these proposals and some others.

Again, when it comes to this cascading crisis, we should help fellow Americans first, even as we plan and execute policies that protect our economy.

First, we take actions to fight this virus. First, we get lifelines to our workers, our parents, our students, our seniors, our small businesses. If your house is on fire, the first thing you worry about is not smoke damage to the roof; you try to put out the fire. That is what our proposal does. It means, first and foremost, we work to address the virus itself and the people most impacted.

In the midst of a sprawling health and economic catastrophe, industry bailouts should not be at the top of our