

looking ahead means the ability to reopen, and that means stimulating the economy and creating—whether it is tax relief or whether it is smart investment in infrastructure. Let's say the projects that are already on the books in my State and yours, projects that are already shovel-ready because they are ready to go, they have gone through the merit-based process in our States, but many of those projects will not be able to be funded this year by our States. Why? Because their revenues have collapsed, particularly their gas taxes have collapsed. So the State match, which is based on the amount of gas you buy, has gone down because people aren't driving nearly as much.

What if we picked up some of that at the Federal level? These are good projects because they aren't bridges to nowhere. They have been through the merit-based process, and they are ready to go. That is an idea. Why? It is good jobs, one, which are needed right now, and good benefits, but also it is economic benefit. Those dollars will come back in terms of improved roads and bridges and ports and airports.

Rural broadband would really help right now. As people are telelearning and teleworking more and more, they are finding out: Oh, my gosh, there are big parts of our country that don't have broadband access, can't get Wi-Fi, and if you can, it is way too slow.

Again, talking to the Farm Bureau today, you would think they would be talking about the price of corn and soybeans, and they were, and the huge issues we have right now in the beef industry and the pork industry and poultry, but they were also talking about: I got my kids at home and we can't do the homework because we can't get broadband in a lot of parts of Ohio—probably in about a third of our State. Ohio is not viewed as a State that has huge, sparsely populated rural areas, but we have enough, and we have a real lack of access to broadband to be able even to do schoolwork, much less to start a small business.

So this is another area where we can provide some help for that here, and it would come back in terms of increased dollars from having more economic development in some of these rural areas. So I think there are some things we need to do there as well.

There has been a lot of discussion about this issue of liability protection. Let me tell you my perspective on this. It is very simple. This should not be a partisan issue. I mean, we should not want these hospitals and these schools and these small businesses and anybody to be able to be sued for something that was totally out of their control. This is not something anybody should be blamed for, certainly in this country. We know where it started, in Hubei Province, in Wuhan, China. But as for the fact that this has come over here and people are affected by it, let's not have a trial lawyer bonanza here because that will result in people not getting back to work. It will result in more costs for our universities.

I understand some of them are being sued right now because they have students who are telelearning. Well, yes, it is not their fault. You can't bring students together right now in the dormitories. It is not safe.

I know there is, again, kind of a partisan nature to this. It shouldn't be partisan at all. We should all want people to go back to work, to be able to go back to school, to be able to access the healthcare system.

I also think that for my colleagues on my side of the aisle who might want to make this broader than the coronavirus, let's keep it to the coronavirus, and I think that is what people intend. Let's keep it to COVID-19, and let's provide the kind of protections—sensible protections—that are necessary to be able to allow people to get back to a normal life.

People say: Well, things are going to be so different now in America. They will be different. We will be more cautious. You know, we will probably, therefore, have a less drastic flu season too because we will be more careful.

With this pandemic, you know, we don't know if it is going to come back again like it did a couple of months ago. Will it come back again in the fall or the winter like that, but we have to be prepared for that. So life will not be exactly the same. There is no question about it. There will be some things that will be different, too. There will be more teleworking because it is has worked well. It is cost effective, and it is efficient. There will be more telemedicine because it has worked well.

I have talked to a number of doctors who were actually very pleased with some of the things they have been able to do remotely. I hope we will have a Congress that works more remotely so when we are on our recesses, as we do every August, and as we do periodically, that we could have remote hearings on a more regular basis because it is great information.

But, ultimately, I think our country will get back on track. Again, we, as Americans, when we get knocked down, we get back up on our feet, and that is what we will do. And we will have again not just the greatest economy on the face of the Earth, but we again will be that beacon of hope and opportunities for the rest of the world. People will again look at America and say: I want to be like that. And we will be able to show that and how we get back on our feet and how we get back to a more normal life, and, once again, the greatest country on the face of this Earth will be able to once again be able to show the world an ideal for everyone to aspire to.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF FIRSTLINK

• Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, I want to recognize the 50th anniversary this month of FirstLink, a vital North Da-

kota organization which provides free and confidential mental health, suicide prevention, and other services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

FirstLink offers listening and support, resource referrals and crisis intervention. Across the entire State of North Dakota and parts of Minnesota, FirstLink answers calls for 17 agencies, notably the 211 helpline and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Those reaching out for help now have the ability to also communicate by text messaging at 898-211.

Last year, FirstLink answered 60,148 calls. Of those, 13,446 were related to suicide. Its Caring Contacts service receives referrals from hospitals and clinics across North Dakota in addition to the phone calls that come in. Caring Contacts offers informal resources and coping strategies, encourages mental health treatment, and provides nonjudgmental listening and support. These calls are offered around the schedules of the individuals in need. Additional training is also offered to staff and volunteers from other State organizations working with people of all ages.

FirstLink began as a grassroots volunteer organization in the Fargo area, first taking calls 6 hours a day. It has grown in hours and scope, thanks to private and public support, a staff of 20, a 12-member board, and many volunteers.

The profound impact of the work FirstLink has done over these past 50 years can never be adequately measured. On behalf of all North Dakotans, I congratulate and sincerely thank executive director Cindy Miller and all staff and volunteers for the difference their commitment has made to the quality of life in our State. May your next 50 years be just as meaningful.●

TRIBUTE TO THE SALEM HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADING TEAM

• Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I am proud to recognize Salem High School's cheerleading team as April's Granite Staters of the Month for coming together, even while social distancing, to help raise the spirits of residents at a local nursing home.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Salem's cheerleading team was unable to compete at their New England conference meet, a moment that the athletes had worked hard for all season. In an effort to cheer up her teammates, as well as bring joy to residents at their local nursing home, Gabrielle Driggers, a sophomore on the team, suggested throwing a parade for the residents, which included Gabrielle's grandmother.

Gabrielle, who has led previous efforts to support her local community by organizing donation drives and fundraisers with the help of her teammates, texted the team's group chat to see if anyone would be willing to participate in a parade for residents at