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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, May 8, 2020, at 10 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2020

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we continue to depend on You to fulfill Your purposes for our lives. You have told us that Your purpose for us is that we live for Your glory. As our lawmakers strive to do Your will, bringing honor to Your name, have Your way in all they say and do.

Lord, send them Your help from celestial portals so that they will please You and be Your ambassadors during these challenging times. Rescue them from anything that will keep them from remembering that nothing is impossible for you.

Be exalted, O God, above the highest heavens. Let Your glory shine in our Nation and world.

We pray in Your loving Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask to speak in morning business for 1 minute.

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. GRASSLEY. COVID-19 has put America through the wringer. There will be many lessons learned and stories to tell from this chapter of our history.

Today, I salute the heroes working on the frontlines during this pandemic. I can't overstate the debt of gratitude we owe the healthcare professionals who selflessly put their own lives on the line to care for COVID-19 patients. Our doctors, nurses, respiratory therapists, nursing home workers, pharmacists, and first responders are among those who have shouldered physical and mental exhaustion to heal the sick. In fact, today is National Nurses Day. So I give our nurses an extra applause on this their day. To the legions of healthcare professionals across America, thank you for the full measure of devotion you have shown to your community and to our great country.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of William R. Evanina, of Pennsylvania, to be Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center. (New Position)

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the core business of our Nation does not stop while we fight the coronavirus. This week, Senate committees are conducting oversight and holding hearings. Members are tracking the implementation of the CARES Act. We are discussing how Congress could do everything from further strengthening the health response to ensuring that a second epidemic of frivolous lawsuits does not redirect the national recovery into a trial lawyer bonanza.

Here on the floor, we are filling major vacancies in the Federal Government. Today, we will confirm Bill Evanina to lead the National Counterintelligence and Security Center. As our Nation grapples with challenges at home, it is critically important that a full complement of skilled professionals keep a close watch on our foes, adversaries, and competitors.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Mr. Evanina's nomination will make him the first Senate-confirmed Director of the NCSC. This role represents our government's senior-most expert in counterintelligence. Fortunately, this nominee has served for 3 decades as special agent with the FBI, as chief of the CIA's Counterespionage Group, and as one of the principal advisers to the Director of National Intelligence.

Mr. Evanina's long professional experience has given him a well-trained eye. He has made clear he is focused on the most serious espionage threats facing our country today: China's insidious efforts to steal our industrial, governmental, technological, and political secrets and Russia's continuing efforts to meddle in our democracy. We have a qualified professional who is tailor-made for an important job. Our colleagues on the Intelligence Committee have reported him out on a unanimous bipartisan basis twice. The vice chairman, Senator WARNER, said: "Bill Evanina should be confirmed without further delay."

But even still, our Democratic colleagues chose to obstruct his nomination on the floor this week and require a full day of floor time to confirm. Ironically, at the same time, we have also heard some of our Democratic colleagues complain that we spend too much time voting on nominations. It is bad enough to spend 3 years delaying nominations to a historic degree and deliberately making the process painful, but it reached a new level of irony for our Democratic friends to do all that and then complain that their own strategy is inconveniencing their schedules.

Essential matters of government do not cease because of the coronavirus. They do not cease because of partisanship either. As long as Senate Democrats continue to make incredibly qualified nominees travel the hard way, including someone whom their own Democratic ranking member openly praised, then, I will assure them they will need to continue to show up and cast votes. The country's business will not go undone.

NOMINATION OF JUSTIN WALKER

Mr. President, speaking of nominations, this morning our colleagues on the Judiciary Committee are examining the qualifications of Judge Justin Walker. Judge Walker is a fellow Kentuckian. He is a district judge of the Western District of Kentucky, and he is President Trump's nominee to serve on our second most important Federal Court, the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia.

I am grateful to Chairman GRAHAM and all the other chairmen who are finding creative ways to conduct important business. The Senate is demonstrating that the work of governing must and can continue, albeit in new ways.

So to respect this time of social distancing, I am going to offer my introduction here on the floor instead of over in the committee. Since Judge

Walker was tapped to serve the people of Kentucky on the Federal district bench, he wasted no time in expanding his strong reputation for intellectual brilliance, legal acumen, and total fairness and impartiality.

In just the last few weeks, Judge Walker has won national attention for an eloquent and persuasive opinion that forcefully defended Kentuckians' basic First Amendment freedom of religion, and he has earned a "well-qualified" rating from the left-leaning American Bar Association that Senate Democrats, like my friend the Democratic leader, have frequently described as "the gold standard."

Let me say that again. In the span of just a couple of weeks, almost simultaneously, Judge Walker has won praise from religious freedom advocates nationwide and the approval of the ABA, which Democrats call "the gold standard." That illustrates the kind of impressive individual the committee is considering this morning.

Already, Judge Walker's reputation as a brilliant legal rising star precedes him. Yet, when you consider the full scope of his education and experience, it is hardly a surprise. Judge Walker graduated from Duke University *summa cum laude*. He graduated from Harvard Law School *magna cum laude*, and he edited the Law Review.

He had prestigious clerkships at the DC Circuit for then-Judge Brett Kavanaugh and at the Supreme Court for then-Justice Anthony Kennedy. He learned at the elbows of legal giants. Then, he moved on to skilled performance in private practice, and then to distinguished scholarship at the University of Louisville Law School, with particular expertise in national security, administrative law, and the separation of powers.

Indeed, it is an impressive record. As Kentucky's secretary of State, Mike Adams, put it recently, "Judge Walker is more than just a [C.V.]" Hence, the outpouring of praise from his peers, colleagues, and neighbors in Kentucky who know him well. One hundred Kentucky lawyers, many of whom have practiced before Judge Walker in the district court, wrote to praise his "courage to apply precedent faithfully." Sixteen State attorneys general wrote to share their confidence in Judge Walker's ability to "weigh the facts against the law as it is written . . . not as he wishes it to be."

I am confident our colleagues on the committee will find that this nominee possesses a generational legal mind, a kind heart, and total judicial impartiality.

President Trump made an outstanding choice when he asked this Kentuckian to take his public service to the next level. I am confident Judge Walker will not disappoint. I urge the committee to approve his nomination. I look forward to voting to confirm him soon here on the Senate 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. Mr. 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.

NOMINATION OF JUSTIN WALKER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the Senate is here, open for business. The janitors and food service workers, police officers, and all the staff who operate the floor are here. They are all here. Capitol Police are doing their usual excellent job.

The Republican leader called us back despite the obvious health risks, but we are ready to do the business our country demands. So there is a question that looms: Why isn't the Senate focused on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic? There hasn't been a single vote here on the Senate floor related to coronavirus—not even a nominee related to coronavirus.

Rather than focusing on COVID-19 with laser-like intensity, the Senate Judiciary Committee today will waste precious time on the nomination of Leader MCCONNELL's protegee, Justin Walker, to serve on the DC Court of Appeals, the second most powerful court in the country.

Mr. Walker is a 37-year-old Federalist Society disciple who has more experience as a cable news commentator than he does trying cases in court. Mr. Walker's qualifications pale in comparison to those of previous nominees to the DC Circuit—Democrat and Republican. Nominees by Democratic Presidents and Republican Presidents all were deeply steeped in the law—just about every one—and here we have this?

What Leader MCCONNELL is doing to the courts is nothing short of disgraceful. The judges currently sitting on the second highest court in the land had decades of experience in Supreme Court advocacy, appellate work, criminal law, private practice, academia, and so on, prior to their nominations. Mr. Walker has been a district court judge for less than a year—less than a year. He had no trial experience prior to that.

Inexperience aside, bad enough as that is, Walker's views are way out of the mainstream. In 2018, he described Chief Justice Roberts' opinion upholding our healthcare law as "indefensible" and "catastrophic." Meanwhile, he praised a dissenting opinion by then-Judge Kavanaugh as a "roadmap for the Supreme Court" to invalidate it.

Every Republican who votes for this nominee, Mr. Walker, will be voting to dismantle the ACA and take millions of people's healthcare away from them if his statements prove to be how he judges things, which seems very likely given previous experience of other nominees like this.

This week, legal briefs are due in the Supreme Court case that will determine the future of our healthcare law. In the midst of a global pandemic, at a time when our healthcare system has never been more important, Senate Republicans are preparing to jam through a judge who believes it should all be crashing down. Tens of millions of people would lose their health insurance, and protections for Americans with preexisting conditions would be eliminated.

Mr. Walker's nomination would be controversial in normal times, to say the least—less experience in the court than on TV. During this public health crisis, his nomination is nothing short of a disgrace. The Senate should be focused on helping the country—hospitals and doctors, nurses and healthcare workers, essential employees and small businesses and families suffering from huge financial hardship.

There are millions of newly unemployed Americans, but the only jobs issue the Republican majority seems to be focused on this week is the jobs of rightwing judges who wish to dismantle healthcare at a time when healthcare is needed more than ever. Let me say that again. There are millions of newly unemployed Americans, but in the Senate, the Republican majority is spending time giving jobs to rightwing judges.

Now, let's get back to what matters. Democrats are focused on helping workers, small businesses, and American families. In times of crisis and economic hardship, these average Americans, working people—they take it on the chin. That is where our focus needs to be—not on legal immunity for big corporations, not on big oil or gas companies, not on juicing the markets. The focus should be on average folks. That is who all of us in Congress should be focused on helping right now.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Now, on the administration, Congress can only do so much. I have actually been very proud of how both parties have come together over the past few months to pass historic legislation 96 to nothing—96 to nothing—with a great deal of input and improvement by the Democratic minority. But to make this legislation work, we need a competent, steady, focused administration to not only implement our laws but coordinate our national response.

It is no secret that the Trump administration has been anything but focused, anything but steady, anything but competent. President Trump seems to spend more time deflecting blame, attacking others, pushing quack medicines, and hiding from the truth than he does actually leading our Nation's response to this crisis.

Last night, in an interview on ABC News, the President said that his failure to prepare our national stockpiles with medical equipment was because "he had a lot of other things going on." The national stockpile for the vital PPE that our frontline workers need

and other materials—the President failed to prepare our stockpiles with this equipment because he had a lot of other things going on? That is a President?

Vice President PENCE yesterday confirmed that the White House was winding down its Coronavirus Task Force long before the disease has been contained, waving the white flag of surrender to COVID-19 long before the battle is over.

A report in today's New York Times details the failures of the administration and Mr. Kushner in particular to procure critical supplies at a time when we lack masks, gloves, and other protective equipment. Instead of appointing a military person with experience in command and control, as I suggested, Mr. Kushner recruited a team of consultants who had "little to no experience with government procurement procedures or medical equipment."

Now we are reading reports of a whistleblower from the Department of Health and Human Services who reports that there was "pressure from HHS leadership to ignore scientific merit and expert recommendations and instead to award lucrative contracts based on political connections and cronyism." This whistleblower is scheduled to appear before a House committee next week. This whistleblower should come before the Senate as well. Senators have many questions to ask him. I believe Senators on both sides of the aisle would have those questions.

So this was and is a time when the American people need the executive branch to lead a coordinated response to this evil virus, to listen to medical experts, to heed their advice, to respect and listen to science, but President Trump seems unwilling and unable to handle the truth, and it is hurting our country each and every day.

I yield the floor.

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

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

NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today is the first day of National Nurses Week—an annual commemoration each May celebrating the contributions of nurses—so today seemed like a fitting day to come down to the floor and talk about the contributions of nurses and other essential workers over the past couple of months.

When we think about heroism, we tend to think of striking actions that take place in extreme circumstances—running into burning buildings, jumping onto a grenade to save a fellow soldier, racing out under fire to rescue a wounded comrade. And it is right that when we think of heroism, we think of such acts—acts of superhuman courage, generosity, and self-sacrifice.

The past couple of months have also reminded us of another kind of heroism—the quiet heroism of doing one's duty, of getting up and going to work and doing your job day after day in difficult circumstances, even when you are tired, even when you are scared, even when you know that doing your job could place you in danger. We have seen a lot of that heroism over the past couple of months.

A lot of Americans have been able to telework during the coronavirus crisis, but many, many more have had to go out and do the work that can't be done from home: police officers, first responders, pharmacists, grocery store employees, farmers and ranchers, food supply workers, cleaning personnel, bank employees, utility workers, delivery drivers, and most of all, doctors and nurses.

Over the past few weeks, we have come to realize how much we rely on these individuals and that society couldn't operate without them. All the food in the world won't do us any good if it doesn't make it to grocery store shelves. That prescription from the doctor for lifesaving blood pressure medication is useless without a pharmacist to dispense the drug. We tend to take our utilities for granted, but what would we do during this crisis if no one was picking up our trash or making sure that the water keeps running and the electricity keeps flowing?

Sometimes heroism looks like running into a burning building, and sometimes it looks like putting on a mask and gloves and stocking the shelves with bread and pasta and cereal.

I want to say a special word about medical personnel. Of all the essential workers who have gotten up and gotten on with their duty in these days of the pandemic, medical personnel have displayed a special courage. They have been on the frontlines of this battle, the ones directly confronting the disease. Every day when they go to work, they go to work knowing that day could be the day they catch the virus from a sick patient, but they go to work anyway. They have read about and sometimes seen colleagues die from the disease. At times, they have lacked adequate protective equipment, but they have gone to work anyway.

Those nurses we are celebrating this week have worked 12-hour shifts providing medical care in a high-stress environment and have still found time to sit with and comfort patients. I have read more than one story about nurses making sure coronavirus patients separated from family and friends don't die alone.

To our Nation's doctors and nurses and other medical personnel: Thank you. We are so grateful for your courage and for your sacrifice.

Before I close, I want to say a special thank-you to the essential workers around the Capitol Complex here in Washington.

While Senators have been able to do aspects of our job remotely, we have

also had to be here in the Capitol to do the critical work of responding to the crisis, and we simply couldn't be here without the contributions of a number of individuals: the men and women of the Capitol Police, the cleaning staff, the food service workers, the maintenance technicians and other support staff, the staffers who have to be in the office for the Senate to be able to operate, and the staffers right here on the floor—the doorkeepers and cloakroom staff and individuals from the Offices of the Secretary and the Parliamentarian.

I know these are stressful days to be coming to work. I know you have been asked to exceed your normal duties. I am incredibly grateful and I know that all of my colleagues are incredibly grateful for everything you have done to keep the Senate operating safely. It is because of you that we are able to get keeping our work done for the American people.

Sooner or later, we are going to get through this pandemic and life will return to something resembling normal, but I hope we will still remember to be grateful for the people who have kept our society running during this crisis, who have shown us, in a difficult and challenging time, how to get up every day and do our duty.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM R. EVANINA

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I rise to oppose the confirmation of William Evanina, whom we will be voting on shortly. Because of his failure to protect whistleblowers, leading whistleblower protection organizations support the opposition to Mr. Evanina's confirmation.

I ask unanimous consent that the statements of two organizations, true advocates of whistleblower rights at this crucial time, be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Government Accountability Project, May 6, 2020]

SENATOR WYDEN OPPOSES SENIOR INTELLIGENCE OFFICIAL'S NOMINATION OVER WHISTLEBLOWERS

WASHINGTON—Today, Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) opposed William Evanina's nomination to serve as the Senate-confirmed Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center (NCSC). Sen. Wyden's opposition comes days after Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA) lifted his 2018 hold on Mr. Evanina, placed in part because "Mr. Evanina was responsible for developing policies and procedures to address retaliatory security clearance actions" taken against whistleblowers. Mr. Evanina has yet to produce those policies and procedures, leaving government investigators with little guidance.

Government Accountability Project's National Security Analyst Irvin McCullough said,

"Losing your security clearance means losing your livelihood for many Intelligence Community employees. These folks' whistle-

blowing protections were specifically designed to give special care to whistleblowers whose security clearances are revoked in retaliation for making protected disclosures. However, the Director of National Intelligence never implemented uniform policies and procedures for these whistleblowers, meaning agencies can act as their own fiefdoms when adjudicating these complaints. While a whistleblower at the CIA has the same rights as a whistleblower at the NSA, one may find it much harder to enforce their rights simply because their agency is free to apply harsher standards than the other. That is unacceptable. Bill Evanina was directed to issue universal guidance for all agencies to follow when investigating these types of retaliation complaints, but he hasn't done it. While Mr. Evanina is a dedicated public servant who has contributed greatly to our country's national security, this is his job and he needs to do it. We thank Senator Wyden for taking a stand to protect whistleblowers and ensure accountability inside the Intelligence Community."

Contact: Andrew Harman, Communications Director.

STATEMENT FROM LIZ HEMPOWICZ, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC POLICY, PROJECT ON GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT

"POGO commends Senator Wyden for standing up for whistleblowers by refusing to confirm Mr. Evanina until this critical issue is resolved. Any security clearance action must be based on the national interests of our country, not personal bias or retaliation. Retaliatory security clearance actions undermine the security clearance process, this is why Congress made it unlawful to retaliate against a whistleblower by restricting their access to classified information. ODNI charged Mr. Evanina's office with the creation of uniform guidance for investigating retaliatory actions, but he has failed to fulfil that mandate even after several years. Thank you to Senator Wyden for standing up for whistleblowers and their right to a fair and equal investigation."

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, it is currently open season on whistleblowers under the Trump administration. Donald Trump and those around him have made it clear that anyone who speaks up about waste, fraud, abuse, or lawbreaking can be punished. If you are a whistleblower under the Trump administration, Donald Trump himself and his echo chamber will publicly call you a liar. They will threaten to make your name public, even at the cost of your physical security. They will prevent your complaints from getting to the Congress, and they will fire the inspectors general who investigate your complaints.

Now, more than ever, courageous whistleblowers deserve leaders who are going to protect them, defend them, and vigorously advocate and work for them. They deserve leaders who are going to stand up to Donald Trump and anybody else who tries to punish those who are going to speak truth—truth, especially, to those in power.

I am rising today, taking this time of the Senate, to speak on behalf of whistleblowers who feel under siege right now. I am on the floor to oppose the confirmation of William Evanina's track record of inaction and why he should not be the Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center.

The fact is that Mr. Evanina has failed, repeatedly, the key test on protecting whistleblower rights. Specifically, he failed to enact whistleblower protections that the Congress required in 2014. Think about that—all those years to get the job done and he didn't do it. That is a 6-year track record of letting down whistleblowers and failing to follow the law.

Today, Congress ought to stand up for whistleblowers, protect our democracy, and the rule of law. And when Congress does act and pass whistleblowers' protection legislation the way this body did in 2014, the Congress must not reward those who ignore the whistleblower protection laws. Here, you have a case of exactly that, refusal to implement it for almost 6 years, and the person we are discussing with that track record of not being there for whistleblowers at a crucial time is being considered for a job promotion in the Senate.

I want to unpack, for a few minutes, what the world looks like now to a potential whistleblower in today's intelligence community. One of the biggest threats faced by whistleblowers who work with classified information is that their bosses are going to retaliate against them by revoking their security clearances. Without clearances, they can't do their jobs, their livelihoods are ruined, and their families suffer. That threat has a chilling effect on potential whistleblowers and makes it less likely that abuses are going to be investigated and brought to light.

The Congress has cared about this for years. It is why, in 2014, the Congress passed legislation specifically prohibiting the revocation of security clearances as a form of retaliation against whistleblowers.

Here is what the questions were. What happens if a whistleblower's boss simply insists that they revoked the clearance for some other reason? What if they say it wasn't retaliation for being a whistleblower? Does the whistleblower have any recourse? Is there an appeals process? Or are whistleblowers, who stick their neck out to report waste, fraud, and abuse, just out of luck?

The Congress then stood with whistleblowers. In that same 2014 law, Congress required the Director of National Intelligence, in consultation with the Attorney General and the Secretary of Defense, to develop and implement policies and practices to make that appeals process for whistleblowers a reality. In other words, the Congress recognized that if whistleblowers were truly going to be protected from retaliation, there had to be a meaningful process for them to defend themselves against agencies that always have all the power and always have an obvious incentive to silence and remove those who speak up about abuses.

This important law was passed by Congress in July 2014. As of that day in 2014, the Director of National Intelligence should have been drafting those

policies, but they didn't do it in 2014, or in 2015, or in 2016, or in 2017, or 2018, or 2019—all those years of inaction—and certainly they haven't done it in 2020, especially because of the pandemic, because this is a crucial time when whistleblower protection is needed, now more than ever, because we need those folks to be speaking truth to policy-makers.

I ask the Senate: Who is at the helm every single one of those years of inaction? The person the Senate is thinking about promoting today, William Evanina. Six years have passed, and Mr. Evanina has not produced those whistleblower protection policies required by law.

During that time, there had been five Directors of National Intelligence. The Congress made the Director of the NCSC a Senate-confirmed position. Mr. Evanina kept his job, becoming both Acting Director and the nominee. Meanwhile, Congress reached out to ask: What is the story on these policies? Is anybody actually moving to protect the whistleblowers, as Congress required in 2014?

I want to say it again. On Mr. Evanina's watch, nothing happened in 2014, nothing happened in 2015, nothing happened in 2016, and nothing happened in 2017, 2018, 2019, and not in 2020—no policies, lots of empty rhetoric and no policies. Without the actual policies, whistleblowers are vulnerable, and when they tell the truth and push for accountability, they suffer.

Every day, Donald Trump steps up his attacks on whistleblowers, on inspectors general, and on the whole system of accountability that has traditionally been bipartisan. Congress has pushed back, passing laws to protect whistleblowers, but the laws have to mean something for the sake of whistleblowers and the rule of law. Congress should not reward those who ignore the law and leave whistleblowers vulnerable. That is what Mr. Evanina has done for 6 years. That is why I cannot support his confirmation. He has defied the law and failed to protect whistleblowers.

I am going to state the obvious. When the Congress passes a law, it has to be implemented. When Congress directs the government to protect whistleblowers, that is something that is priority business. In 2014, this body tried to protect whistleblowers. A law was passed. Mr. Evanina has ignored it all these years. That is just not acceptable.

Now, with Donald Trump and his administration feeling free to publicly attack whistleblowers again and again and conduct an unremitting assault on the entire whistleblower system, laws to protect them are especially important to our democracy. Day after day, we see the costs of a campaign to silence people who speak up about abuses. We see it in his efforts to cover up his failed, often corrupt, responses to the COVID-19 crisis. We see it across the board.

Now is when this country needs officials who are going to demonstrate leadership, who are going to stand up for the brave and the people who are willing to put their neck out to report misconduct. Whistleblowers deserve it, and the country deserves it.

Now, the last point I am going to make—my colleagues probably have heard it, and they are going to hear it, I believe, again—is that Mr. Evanina is going to promise once more, after 6 years of empty promises, to complete these critical whistleblower protection policies. What I would ask Senators is this: Enough is enough, right? After 6 years—6 years of unfulfilled promises—the Senate ought to say: The country deserves better. The country deserves action, and the country deserves real protection for whistleblowers.

Mr. Evanina remains the Acting Director. I want him—even after he hasn't done it for 6 years, I want him to complete those whistleblower protection policies. When they are completed and the law Congress passed is implemented, it seems to me that is the time for the Senate to discuss again whether Mr. Evanina should get a promotion.

Now, last, I just want to come back to how I started. I am not the only one who feels this way. The country's leading whistleblower organizations have made it clear they oppose Mr. Evanina's confirmation due to his failure to produce policies. They include such organizations as the Government Accountability Project, the Project on Government Oversight, Whistleblower Aid, and National Security Counselors. It is not just one Member of the U.S. Senate who is here to say that it is time to finally ensure that these courageous Americans, these patriots, who are willing to come forward when all the incentives in American Government are to stay quiet, not put yourself at risk, don't put your career in jeopardy—when all the incentives are for them to stay quiet, in this country right now, we need them speaking truth more than ever before. I oppose this nomination because there is a long, long track record of not being willing to stand up for these courageous whistleblowers, and I intend to vote against the nominee.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of William Evanina to be the first Senate-confirmed Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center, or NCSC. I believe Bill is an American patriot and an American success story.

He was raised in Peckville, PA, with very modest means. He was the first in his family to go to college. Prior to joining the FBI in 1996, his first job was with the General Services Administration in Philadelphia. Over his 24-year long career with the FBI, Bill investigated organized crime and violent crimes. He investigated the 9/11 ter-

rorist attacks, the anthrax attacks, and the Daniel Pearl kidnapping. Bill also led the counterespionage group at the Central Intelligence Agency. He earned a reputation as the consummate counterintelligence and security professional, fiercely dedicated to the mission with unquestionable honor.

Then, in June 2014, then-Director of National Intelligence, Jim Clapper—someone whom I know and respect very much—appointed Bill to serve as the Director of the NCSC. Many technical and complex activities fall under NCSC, including personnel security policy, information technology protection standards, CI cyber operations, supply chain risk management, threat awareness for the U.S. critical infrastructure, and damage assessments from spies and unauthorized disclosures. I have partnered, in my role as vice chairman, with Bill on many topics, to include educating industry about the threats posed by China and reforming an antiquated personnel vetting system.

The Intelligence Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016 recognized the vital work that NCSC does and made the position subject to Presidential nomination and Senate confirmation. In February 2018, President Trump nominated Bill to be the first Senate-confirmed Director. The Senate Intelligence Committee considered the nomination in May of 2018 and unanimously—unanimously, with some concerns from my colleague from Oregon, but unanimously—recommended his confirmation to the full Senate.

His nomination didn't get taken up because a Member on the opposite side had a concern. We considered his nomination again in February 2019 in the new Congress, and, again, our committee voted unanimously in favor of his nomination.

Unfortunately, over the last 2 years, despite universal recognition of Bill's qualifications for the position, his nomination became entangled in unrelated matters. Despite the delay—and I think Bill had plenty of opportunities to leave the government—Bill stayed the course, committed to the mission above all else.

Now, I share my colleague from Oregon's concerns about whistleblowers. I have seen this administration and this White House's disregard for whistleblowers. I tell you this: I believe I have Bill's commitment that the matter of processing the procedures on whistleblower protections will be dealt with. I also feel extraordinarily strongly that at this moment in time, when there is not a single Senate-confirmed appointee in the whole Office of Director of National Intelligence, now more than ever, we need at least one career intelligence professional with a good record, confirmed by this Senate, standing guard over an operation that right now, unfortunately, seems to be directed too often by political appointees that, both, disregard protection for whistleblowers and, in my

mind, too often disregard protections for our whole intelligence community.

With the fact that we have now gotten rid of the unrelated matters that were precluding Bill's confirmation by my colleague on the majority, I think we deserve to give this nominee what he and the country deserves—a vote. And my hope is a very strong vote of confirmation so that we can send someone who, as a career professional, has a commitment to holding truth first and foremost above political interference. We need Bill Evanina confirmed in this position.

I look forward to Mr. Evanina's confirmation today so that he can continue addressing the many important counterintelligence and security challenges facing our Nation.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of William R. Evanina, of Pennsylvania, to be Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center. (New Position)

Mitch McConnell, Lisa Murkowski, Chuck Grassley, Josh Hawley, Joni Ernst, John Barrasso, John Cornyn, Shelley Moore Capito, Deb Fischer, Rob Portman, John Thune, Roger F. Wicker, John Boozman, Roy Blunt, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mike Braun, Marsha Blackburn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of William R. Evanina, of Pennsylvania, to be Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center (New Position), shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) would have voted "yea".

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 83, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 82 Ex.]

YEAS—83

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

NAYS—7

Blumenthal	Markey	Wyden
Duckworth	Merkley	
Hirono	Van Hollen	

NOT VOTING—10

Brown	Murray	Warren
Burr	Sanders	Whitehouse
Leahy	Schatz	
Moran	Stabenow	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 83, the nays are 7.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, early last December or at least sometime later last year, people in Wuhan, China, began showing symptoms of what was at that time an unidentifiable respiratory disease in increasing numbers. We now know that virus as COVID-19, and it has completely upended our way of life in the United States and around the globe. This virus has infected over 3.5 million people around the world and killed, tragically, over 68,000 people in the United States, and that includes over 900 incredible and great Coloradans, my home State. We certainly mourn with those families who have lost loved ones, and we will keep fighting for a path forward as we get through this together.

I want to commend in the strongest terms possible our frontline workers, whether it has been our first responders, our healthcare professionals, or those who have allowed us to continue to enjoy a safe and secure food supply; people in the essential businesses who each and every day don't complain but go to work to help make sure our communities can get back to work. The list of heroes in our communities, those who have given so much, goes on and on and on.

I think it is important to recognize that as we have addressed the coronavirus challenge in this country—the measures we have taken, the steps

that have been laid out by mayors and governors and the President—they have been to comply with guidances and health directives and to comply with the best science and scientists our country has, not out of fear of the coronavirus, not because people are afraid of COVID-19, but they have done it out of love—love for their community; love for their parents and grandparents, whom they hope to keep safe and healthy; love for our country, to stop the spread and flatten the curve.

So to all of our incredible healthcare workers, the frontline workers, essential workers, grocery store clerks and gas station workers, mechanics at farm equipment dealerships that have remained open to keep tractors running during planting, to our ranchers and farmers who have kept our food supply flowing: Thank you.

People everywhere across Colorado are hurting, obviously, because of this pandemic. I have heard numerous stories across our great State. I have held telephone townhalls in every congressional district in Colorado, speaking directly with Coloradans who have lost their jobs, who are unsure about how they will feed their family, and who have endless questions about what the future holds for them.

I have heard from restaurant workers in Denver who were laid off when their restaurant closed. I have heard from restaurant owners who have done everything they can to keep their restaurant workers employed—preparing meals and providing them to the hungry and the homeless.

A small business owner in Monument, CO, shared with me how difficult it was to lay off 35 dedicated staff members but not having a choice.

I have talked to businesses in El Paso County near Colorado Springs who used the last prepaid minutes on a cell phone to participate in our townhall to try to figure out where they could get food.

I have talked to elderly Coloradans who were afraid to go to the grocery store because they didn't know if they had special hours. They had an underlying condition, and they didn't know if they could go safely. Our staff was able to help this person get the groceries they needed and the disinfectant they had requested and leave some information about the special hours that grocery stores around the town were holding for people who needed a little bit more social distancing—more space, more time, a safer environment to go out.

But the effects of the coronavirus aren't because somebody intentionally decided to hurt our economy, but they are hurting because of the necessary public health actions their government has taken. It is in large part the government's responsibility to help get them through this because it was the government that said to them: Stay at home. Close your doors. Don't go to work.

It is our responsibility to provide the help that our economy needs to get

moving again, to get people back to work, because it was the advice of governments, from the local levels to the Federal level, that said: These are the things you need to do to stop the spread and flatten the curve.

Throughout this entire health epidemic, I have approached it with a three-prong strategy. Throughout this process, this three-prong strategy has been the focus I have used to approach what we as a country must do to get through. These are not steps that should be taken one at a time. You don't accomplish step 1 and then attempt to accomplish step 2 and then maybe get to step 3. These are things that need to be done all at the same time as we move on our path to recovery.

First, we must obviously address the immediate health crisis. The second prong is, we must make sure we are providing real-time assistance to real individuals who are really hurting across the State of Colorado and the country. The third prong is to make sure that we are supporting our businesses through this crisis, to make sure that when the health emergency is over, we have an economy that is able to snap back and run strong.

These steps have to be done all at the same time—not step 1, then 2, then 3—but the first prong, the steps taken to flatten the curve and stop the spread, has been absolutely critical and will continue to be critical.

Congress has taken many steps to support the health response, including \$175 billion to support healthcare providers, \$17 billion to the Strategic National Stockpile for medical equipment and supplies, and a recent infusion of \$25 billion to support testing, including dedicated funding for States and Tribes. We have also spent money to support scientists as they rapidly developed and produced new testing technologies and worked to get them to the market as quickly as possible. But it is going back to that bravery of our frontline healthcare workers, our first responders, our public health experts, as well as the innovation of our scientists who have served as beacons of light during this difficult time and will help us get through this health emergency.

On prong 2, providing individuals with the assistance they need, we have continued to do that and must continue to do that to address this health emergency because when we started the very first steps, we said to every American: Please stay home. Figure out how to socially distance.

As a result, unemployment claims have skyrocketed to record numbers as Americans grappled with work reductions, job loss, and overall changes to our daily lives.

It is important that Congress acted quickly to provide individuals with immediate assistance. In the CARES Act, we provided direct individual assistance to millions of individuals and married couples across the State and

across the country. We allowed Federal student loan borrowers to defer payments for 6 months without interest or penalties. We established a temporary Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program for those who are self-employed or independent contractors whose livelihoods have been impacted by the pandemic—people who otherwise might not have had a place to go.

One consistent message I have heard from countless Coloradans as I have spoken with them during the pandemic is that they appreciate our bipartisan efforts. It is beyond that. It is not simply a bipartisan effort where Republicans and Democrats are working together; it is actually nonpartisan because Republicans and Democrats realize there is no reason to bear that mantle of “party” because so many people are hurting, and we know what needs to be done for the country to work together, to be nonpartisan, and to provide the relief real individuals need in real time.

We have to keep fighting in this nonpartisan way and this bipartisan way to make testing more widely available, to support State and local governments, to advocate for frontline and essential workers, and to set up our economy to return as strong as it was before the pandemic. Thank goodness our economy was as strong as it was when we went into this. Imagine where we would be if we had a weak or struggling economy as we entered the health emergency.

Prong 3 requires support for businesses. The economic relief that was provided through the Paycheck Protection Program under the CARES Act continues to be an essential tool for our small businesses and families across all four corners of Colorado. Over \$10 billion in round 1 and round 2 of the Paycheck Protection Program has been delivered to keep people on the payroll in Colorado. The Paycheck Protection Program was created to keep employees on the payroll and to help keep bills paid so that workers can keep their jobs, salaries, and benefits—they can keep them—and so small businesses can hit the ground running when they are able to resume operations. Think about the millions of small businesses in our country responsible for over \$6 trillion in salary every year in this country.

We often talk about small businesses being the backbone, the foundation, and the bedrock of our economy, and it is absolutely true. Small businesses employ nearly half of all American workers, and they make up 99.5 percent of all Colorado businesses, employing more than 1.1 million Coloradans.

Because of clarifications to the program I fought for, just last week I heard from three rural hospitals in Colorado that received Paycheck Protection Program loans through their local community bank. They were within a matter of a week or weeks of having to lay off employees and in some cases, shut down. The access to the Paycheck

Protection Program was an absolute game changer for these critical and vital rural hospitals. Now these hospitals can continue to provide both critical healthcare services to their communities and jobs for their employees, and in many communities, these rural hospitals are the largest employer in that community.

These actions and programs are essential cornerstones to our recovery, but we must finish laying the foundation to ensure our economy snaps back and runs strong. While governments can allow businesses to open, the American people simply won't return—they won't fully return to the economy until they have confidence that the virus is under control.

The first step to tackling any problem, of course, is seeing it, and that is especially true with COVID-19. How do we see it? Through widespread testing. Widespread testing is key to seeing the bigger picture in the fight against this virus. Our country's well-being both medically and financially relies on our ability to see where the illness is and where it is not and where it is spreading and where it is declining. That, in turn, depends on our ability to ramp up testing capacity.

Rapid testing for COVID-19 and further research into the benefits, applications, and development of that body of testing will help show which Coloradans have been exposed to COVID-19 and the percentage of our population that has already recovered. This will better inform local schools, businesses, and governments as they make their own determinations about the path forward. It will help provide peace of mind for Coloradans as they start to visit their families, reschedule doctors' appointments for routine preventative services, and return to their jobs. It will also help States and local health departments decide what type of other responsive measures are necessary.

My approach to this pandemic has been an all-hands-on-deck approach. When the Governor calls me and says our State needs more tests, more masks, or more equipment, I get to work fighting to find that assistance. Working together with the Governor, leaders at the Federal level, and our allies abroad, we have been able to secure hundreds of thousands of masks and tests for our State, and we are working around the clock for more.

Without effective widespread testing and a corresponding strategy that leverages and improves public health infrastructure to support monitoring, we cannot have a real-time response to the virus. Rapid testing and the ability of public health departments to inform individuals with positive cases quickly so they can take appropriate action and further prevent the spread is critical to making sure our entire economy is not forced to shut down in the future.

The dollars we have provided through various phases of action as it relates to the health emergency will help provide

that testing to help mobilize new testing, to invent the kind of testing we need—an antigen-based test, an antibodies test—the opportunities we have to rapidly let the people of this country know what is happening, what is not happening, and how we should tailor our public policies to fit the spread of the virus and the decline of the virus and the reopening of our economy.

We need a test that is so ubiquitous that people can buy a Big Gulp at 7-Eleven and buy a COVID-19 test and keep it in their car or keep it in their first aid kit so that if they wake up in the morning with a sore throat, they can test and they can have the actual results. Instead of shutting down a household or a community or a country, we can get the results to implement better public policies then and there.

Congress must also make sure that the Paycheck Protection Program continues to be funded and improved where needed to better support America's small businesses and the employees they are able to keep on the payroll as a result. We must make the program flexible enough to be effective, and we must make the rules so clear—so clear—that people will be competent that they can use it.

I have seen the headlines about big businesses taking this money when they might not really need it, but I have also talked to 15-employee companies that have needed \$30,000 or \$40,000 to pay their workers and that are now terrified of crossing Federal prosecutors.

I heard from a Coloradan I have known my entire life who is working with her son's business. This is an essential business that has remained open because of the role they play in our food supply. They went to the bank, and they got a loan under the Paycheck Protection Program. They were very excited that they would be able to keep their doors open, and then they received a letter that said: Hey, are you sure you needed this loan? Maybe you didn't. Now they don't know whether they should keep it. They are terrified to use it.

While we have to make sure our programs aren't abused, we also have to make sure we don't create a chilling effect on businesses that truly need it. I understand the need to be careful about who gets this money, but when we are scaring businesses that we all agree need assistance the most, maybe things have gone too far and Congress is no longer helping.

Congress should act to make rules that are clear. We should help guide those rules to be clear and bring confidence to the program to make sure that people can be at work, keep their jobs, and keep their benefits.

When the foundation is secure and we have this foundation secure, we should then explore the immediate opportunities for economic activity and employment—the opportunities that will benefit every American and create the

conditions for a quicker recovery. Until the American consumer is fully back, with confidence in our economy, we need to look for ways to fill the gap.

We have long talked about the need to refurbish our infrastructure. Now is the time to do it.

This health crisis has laid bare the cyber desert that exists in many of our rural communities. We should make a concentrated effort to make rural broadband a reality.

We should fully and permanently fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund and put funding towards our deferred maintenance projects across our Federal lands that we all cherish so much. That will create immediate jobs building roads and maintaining trails and creating the kinds of job opportunities that many of our high mountain towns desperately need as a result of this health emergency and now economic emergency.

I have introduced a bill that has the President's support and both sides of the aisle, and certainly the ideas are supported across both Chambers of Congress—the Great American Outdoors Act. Communities throughout the Nation would benefit, and these funds would help contribute to a strong and growing outdoor recreation economy—one of the largest drivers of our economy in Colorado and in many States.

In short, we need to take some big and bold steps to make sure that our economy is back on track and to help accelerate it once again. We need these big steps because we have taken a hard shot in the last couple of months.

We also need to support mental health efforts. Prior to the pandemic, 70 percent of Colorado's mental health need was unmet, and on average, one Coloradan died by suicide every 7 hours. Before COVID-19, I was working on a number of legislative efforts to improve mental health support, and COVID-19 has only underscored just how time-sensitive these matters are—particularly my legislation, the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act.

In a mental health emergency, it is almost impossible to remember the current 10-digit hotline. Sometimes there is more than one 10-digit hotline. So establishing 9-8-8 as a national suicide prevention hotline will save lives and help more Americans in need to access critical mental health support.

S. 2661, the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act, is more than smart policy that will help save lives; it is a statement that our government recognizes the crisis and is working across party lines to address it. Establishing 9-8-8 as a national suicide prevention hotline will save lives and help more Americans who need access to critical mental health support.

I have been proud to push for this three-digit hotline and funding for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, and I will keep fighting to make suicide prevention services more accessible. Let's come together, and let's get this done.

Access to mental health care is especially important during this trying time filled with grief and uncertainty for so many people, and we must ensure we are doing everything we can to prevent these devastating outcomes from occurring.

But no matter how bleak our situation looks, it is important to remember that America has faced its fair share of challenges. Together, we have persevered and persisted through world wars, economic disasters, the September 11 terrorist attacks, and much, much more. While this virus will not be the last challenge our country faces, we know that this, too, shall pass, and together, we will make it to the other side stronger than ever. I have faith and confidence in the American people and in our ability to pull together and to continue to meet this challenge head-on. Colorado has been that shining example of resiliency in so many instances, and it will continue to be.

Over these last several months, I have spoken directly to countless Coloradans, all unsure of what the future holds, but they are certain we will get through this by looking up to that great Rocky Mountain horizon. Coloradans everywhere are stepping up and meeting this challenge in the spirit of our great country. They are donating food, they are donating personal protective equipment, and they are donating time, talents, and their blood. Individuals and businesses across Colorado and across the country are seeing needs and responding to those in need.

To the brave healthcare providers fighting around the clock, the reliable farmers and ranchers working day in and day out to keep food on the table, and all the essential workers who continue to selflessly put themselves at risk to ensure others are taken care of first, I give my deepest thanks and praise.

In Colorado, we have lost two first responders on the frontlines in the fight against COVID-19.

Deputy Jeff Hopkins served in the El Paso County Sheriff's Office, and he had been serving there since 2001. On April 1, he passed away from COVID-19 at the age of 41—1 day after he was diagnosed with COVID-19. His death was determined to be a line-of-duty death, which is a reminder to all of us that our brave first responders are in harm's way every day but especially during this pandemic.

We also recently lost Paul Cary, who worked as a firefighter and paramedic in Aurora for more than 30 years. Paul was 66 years old, and he selflessly drove—selflessly drove—27 hours straight to New York in an ambulance to help out in the battle against COVID-19. While there, he was tending to patients and transporting them to hospitals. After falling ill with the virus, Paul died on April 30. Coloradans lined the streets to give him a hero's farewell.

To Deputy Hopkins, to Paul Cary, and to the countless heroes like them

who are risking their own lives for our health and safety every day, thank you.

First responders and medical professionals all across our State continue to make countless sacrifices on our behalf.

The long hours and time away from family and loved ones, the undeniable mental toll this pandemic takes on those on the frontlines and the health risks—these sacrifices don't go unnoticed. We must do everything we can to make sure the first responders of COVID-19 have the resources, the support, and the personal protective equipment needed to fight this pandemic.

We will never be able to fully show our deep appreciation for our healthcare providers, frontline employees, and first responders who are working to keep vital parts of our country moving. We have to do everything we can to try to make up what they have done for us in big ways and small ways every day.

In Colorado, we don't look back; we look forward. We look out across the Great Plains, the Great High Plains, up to that majestic Rocky Mountain horizon for that next optimistic day.

In the middle of the health emergency, a couple of weeks ago, I received a letter in the mail, and it had a pair of pliers in this letter, and I really didn't know what it was. It sat on my desk, and I opened it up not knowing what it was.

I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to share an item on the floor that was sent to me during the health pandemic.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROMNEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, in the letter, this pair of pliers came, and I opened it up, and here is what it said:

Senator GARDNER, I want to thank you and everyone at your office profusely for everything that you have done for me. You have allowed for me to continue receiving uninterrupted benefits and care for combat injuries I have sustained while serving as an Officer in the U.S. Army.

In 2014, you came to visit me in the Ward of Walter Reed, while I was still bandaged and pretty beat up, missing my dominant hand and looking overall pretty haggard. You told me a story about the Korfs (My Mom's side) [of the family] in Yuma County.

At this point, I realized who the letter was from, and I remembered very clearly the story I had told this young soldier.

You told me a story about the Korfs (My Mom's side) in Yuma County walking into your family's hardware store and stress-testing pliers.

It was a story I had received from my granddad about these two brothers who would come in years and years ago—decades ago. They would grab a pair of pliers on the parts counter, and they would squeeze them, and they were so strong that they would snap the pin in the pliers. I told him that story.

He wrote in his letter:

Apparently my ancestors wouldn't buy a pair if they didn't stand up to the grip of the

man that I can only imagine was pretty strong in the arms. While I'm sure they only broke a few sets and got away with it by being [expletive], I've enclosed a pair as recompense.

After you visited, I took that story with me. After 5 years as an amputee, I've been an Infantry Officer and I spent years training as a Special Forces Officer—the only amputee to ever pass Assessment and Selection. It's been inspiring to grip this set of pliers and try to snap them.

And then he wrote:

Sometimes our tools break, sometimes it's our fault, sometimes they're not flat sturdy to begin with, sometimes these tools have just been used to the point of failure. Every time, though, what really matters is what we do once that tool is broken. We fix it, get a new one, or we improvise something better. Either way, we figure out how to finish the job, because people are depending on us to get it done.

Carey G. DuVall, CPT U.S. Army, Ft. Bragg, NC.

We face a tremendous challenge unlike we have ever faced in our lifetimes, and, while we are going to use every tool we have to help fix what has happened, we know that every one is not going to be perfect. But we have to keep trying because that is what the American people do every day. They make it work. They fight. They get back on their feet. We have to be in this fight with them.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I think all of us are in awe on a daily basis of those who we have a responsibility to serve. The people of Colorado, the people of Texas, and the people of Connecticut are doing just absolutely extraordinary things, and I hope that over the next several weeks we get to hear more of those stories.

At the end of last week, I got a chance, with my Governor, to go down to a healthcare facility in Bridgeport, CT. It is a healthcare facility that has been designated to serve only COVID-19-positive patients. The nurses and staff came outside into the parking lot area to have a socially distanced, masked conversation with us.

While they have struggles, and while they need help, they have a sense of mission about them that is impressive. They are working double shifts. They barely get to see their kids. They know that their lives are in danger every time they go into a facility where there are only patients who have tested positive for COVID, and yet they know they are doing something with their life today that they will be able to tell their kids and grandkids about. They are making a difference.

I think about those individuals who aren't a first responder, who aren't a healthcare worker but have found a way to do heroic things just in their neighborhoods.

Luciana Vera was already making a difference. She was a bilingual teacher in the Stamford, CT, public school system, but she heard about a crisis that

one of her students was having. One of her student's mother had contracted the virus, had gone into a coma, but was pregnant and delivered a child while she was in a medically induced coma. Her husband also had the virus, as did one of her children. So do you know what Luciana did? Do you know what this teacher did? She took the baby into her home. While she taught her students online during the day, she warmed up bottles and fed that baby at night.

Jerry Sicardi is 100 years old. He lives in Stratford, CT. Even at 100 years old, he decided to get together with his daughter Judy and start making masks. We all have these stories from our States, just folks who started sewing masks and giving them out to people who needed them. Jerry gave them out to his neighbors. He sent some to the Bridgeport Correctional Center. He gave them to former students. Then, when folks learned that Jerry was pretty good at making masks, they would call, and he would make them on order.

These are the stories that could, frankly, fill up the whole day from each one of our States.

While my constituents in Connecticut, who are as generous as that, would have undertaken those actions regardless of the effectiveness of the response from their government, their actions are all the more important, given the failures of their Federal Government to do the right thing by them.

I want to spend a few minutes today talking about the Trump administration's response to the crisis that we are facing. If we are going to be here in Washington, I think it is important for us to talk about what is missing.

There has been a lot of ink spent already criticizing the Trump administration's response to the crisis—that the strategy was wrong, the focus was in the wrong place, or that the level of activity wasn't high enough. But I really think that this is the wrong paradigm. It is the wrong lens through which to have this discussion because the problem really isn't that President Trump's response to coronavirus has been ineffective. It is that he hasn't responded at all. For all intents and purposes, there has been no response to coronavirus from this administration. There have been press conferences. There is a social media presence, but they aren't running a national response.

From the beginning, the response has been left to States, to cities, to counties, to hospitals, to school districts, to nursing homes, to shelters, to food banks, to charitable organizations—really, to every public-facing entity that isn't the administration. We shouldn't lose sight of how remarkable that is—that in the face of the most serious national crisis since 2001, perhaps since Vietnam or World War II, the administration has effectively chosen to stand down and let others lead.

I know that sounds like hyperbole because there is a task force, right?

There are press conferences on TV every day. But hear me out.

At the beginning, the President didn't do nothing. He fanned the flames. He called coronavirus in the early days a "hoax" perpetuated by his political opponents. He telegraphed to the country that this wasn't something we needed to be prepared for because it was just going to go away, despite all the experts telling him differently.

On 12 different occasions, he praised the Chinese response and said that President Xi was doing an excellent job responding to the crisis. He praised, specifically, their transparency. At a moment when the international community was trying to get into China to find out what they knew so that we could start developing vaccines and treatments, the chief apologist in those early days for the Chinese response was our own President.

Arguably, the most significant action that the Trump administration undertook—really, the only action that the President mentions to this day, when pressed for tangible things that he has done—was the set of travel restrictions. But public health experts told the President that the restrictions wouldn't work, especially since they were filled with loopholes. We now know that 400,000 people ended up getting into the United States from the countries that were subject to the restrictions list. The travel ban was feckless. It was a failure. And after that, the administration effectively gave up. They gave up.

What could they have done? As the travel ban started to prove ineffective at stopping the virus and cases started to mount, what could they have done? Well, they could have decided to lead a national effort to make sure we have the supplies necessary to fight the virus. Members of Congress told the administration early on that we needed to appropriate dollars to make sure that we had things like masks and gowns and ventilators. They could have created a national effort to ramp up domestic production of personal protective equipment. They didn't do that.

The administration could have come up with a national testing plan. They could have done an early assessment of how many tests were going to be needed and taken control of the supply chain necessary to make those diagnostic machines and the cartridges that go inside them. They didn't do that.

They could have begun the work of building a national public health workforce. Every expert told the administration that it wasn't just the machines and the equipment, that we were going to need public health workers to do the testing, to then trace the spread of the disease, and to help support quarantines. They could have started to put together a plan to build that workforce at a national level or at least a plan to help States build that workforce. But they didn't do that.

They could have, early on, worked with States to create uniformed stand-

ards for school and business closings. This didn't have to be left to States and municipalities and individual superintendents. The administration could have chosen to lead on the question of how and when we chose to close our economy and our school systems down, but they didn't do that.

They could have joined with other countries to jointly produce a vaccine. In fact, there was an entity set up at the beginning of the Trump administration specifically for that purpose, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations. They could have made an investment in that international organization after having refused to join early on during the President's term, but they didn't do that.

They could have increased aid for developing nations or refugee camps. They could have gone on the international offensive, like President Obama did during the Ebola epidemic, and made sure that we were helping every country beat the virus because, as we know, due to the failure of the travel restrictions, if you don't stop it everywhere, you really are not stopping it anywhere, but they didn't do that.

They could have made sure that everybody in this country had insurance. The Trump administration could have stopped pushing junk plans. They could have, at least temporarily, put on hold the lawsuit to try to end the Affordable Care Act and the 20 million who are insured through it, but they didn't do that.

They could have worked to create a national commitment to make sure that every student has the ability to distance learn and has internet access, or they could have proposed a plan to ramp up special education funding to make sure they are protecting kids with disabilities during this crisis. They didn't do that.

Finally, they could have proposed any of the various programs that Congress developed and passed: the PPP program, the State stabilization fund, the hospital relief fund, the national testing program fund. None of these were initiatives from President Trump.

Early on, as negotiations were beginning on these relief packages, the President's only idea was a payroll tax cut. Frankly, it is still the President's only idea.

The President didn't need to leave all of the legislative leadership to Congress. He and his team could have laid out detailed new programs to combat the virus or to save the economy and pressed Congress to pass them, but they didn't even do that.

I am not saying there aren't meetings. I am not saying there aren't press conferences. But my State, one of the hardest hit in the Nation, has had to effectively fend for itself.

When I talk to State leaders, or hospital executives, or food pantry directors, none of them talk to me about all of the help they are getting from the Trump administration. They talk

about the programs that Congress has passed, but they don't talk about any meaningful, impactful responses to this crisis run by the Trump administration. Do you know why? Because they don't exist, and even when the Trump administration tries to do something meaningful, they screw it up.

Take, for instance, the much-heralded plan to reopen America. Now, that was a good idea, a serious set of guidelines for States to use to judge when the right time is to reopen. I may have quibbles with certain elements of that plan, but I thought they were generally on the right track, giving States some specific guidelines so that we can have some consistency across the country as to when States decide to reopen schools and businesses.

The administration stuck with that plan for about a week, and now President Trump is calling on States to reopen, regardless of whether any of the benchmarks have been met in his own plan. Now he is talking about healthcare workers and cafeteria workers as warriors, apparently preparing them for a summer during which his experts tell him there will be 3,000 coronavirus deaths a day because of these early reopenings. If that is true, the President's so-called coronavirus warriors would be dying at a daily total 10 times that of the warriors who fought in World War II.

Not all of this was avoidable. China, where the virus started, bears serious responsibility for the global spread, but the epidemic did not have to become the crisis of the magnitude we have witnessed today.

A normal President would have been able to take steps early on and throughout that could have controlled the spread. Our President effectively chose to stand aside and leave 50 States and thousands of cities and hospitals to manage the response instead. They were left largely helpless, without significant Federal support, competing against each other for scarce resources, and now our country is in desperate straits. So, once again, it is up to Congress to lead.

I agree with my friend from Colorado that there has been remarkable bipartisan support in this body in order to fill the vacuum that has been created by the refusal of our President to lead, and so we will have to do it again. Let me leave my colleagues with a few suggestions as to the path that we should take going forward to build upon those suggestions proffered by my colleague from Colorado.

First and foremost, we have to admit what is true. The States and the cities are in charge of the response. The Trump administration is not. I have heard my colleagues talk about aid to States or municipalities that are fighting the virus as a bailout. That is nonsense. It is more accurate to talk about what the States and cities are doing as a bailout of the Federal Government.

When the Trump administration refused to run a national response, it was

the States, like mine, and cities, like those in my State, that stepped up to lead the response. All we are asking is that we share in the cost of the States' and cities' efforts to save lives.

Second, our schools are going to be overwhelmed with need when they reopen. I am one of the few parents of school-aged children, children who go to public school. My kids are lucky enough that they don't have special learning needs, and they have two parents who are able to telework from home and support their distance learning. But there are millions of kids who have learning disabilities, who have needs totally unmet during this time who are going to show back up at school way behind and in crisis. We need to appropriate money right now, especially for special education, so that school districts across the country can start to do planning now, this spring and this summer, so that there are supports around those kids when they show back up. Every kid is going to have to catch up. But especially for kids with serious learning disabilities, they are going to need extra help. And States that are going to have expended all of the money available to them to fight the virus and that have cratering revenues because of the shutdown of the economy are not going to be able to fund those special education needs themselves. It is going to have to be us. It is going to have to be us. So why wait until the fall? Let's make a down-payment on that assistance for kids with disabilities and do it now.

Food banks in Connecticut are running dry. They are running dry. We need more support in the next bill for nutrition assistance. We have to start thinking creatively about how to make sure that everybody has access to food. Right now, if you are on a SNAP benefit, you have to go to a grocery store. Well, those aren't safe places for everybody on SNAP benefits. Some of the corner bodegas have closed down. So the only place that might be open is a long way away. So restaurants can be a lifeline right now. Traditionally, we don't allow you to use your SNAP benefits in restaurants, but I think we should temporarily allow for that in the next package we pass. And guess what. That would be a win for people who are on assistance who need more food options. It would also be a win for restaurants that are looking for customers.

Fourth, we have to build that public health workforce. Again, States will not be able to afford it themselves. Every medical expert tells us that it is not just testing. It is tracing the contacts that that individual had. It is quarantining those they had contact with. And that can't be done just with an act. There have to be workers who help do that tracing, who help support the quarantine. We have to build that workforce. Again, there is just no conceivable way that States can pay that by themselves.

Then, lastly, we need to get back into the game internationally. It was a

fallacy from the beginning to think that we can just shut our borders and protect ourselves. That is not how viruses work. In an interconnected economy today, there is no practical way to completely shut down your borders from individuals or products that move across international boundaries.

We have offers right now to engage with our partners internationally on ways that could end up helping to save lives in the United States. I mentioned the Trump administration's refusal to join CEPI, which is the international body working on a vaccine. Why? Why is Europe and Canada and Australia and Japan and Saudi Arabia and India all working jointly on a vaccine, and we are on the outside? It doesn't mean that we would have to stop doing our own congressionally funded work to develop a vaccine, but why not also join the international effort so that we are not on the outside if they develop that vaccine? An easy thing we can do in this next bill is make sure we are both working on a vaccine domestically but also working internationally.

When this crisis is over and life has returned to relative normal, there will be a grave, serious accounting of how badly the Trump administration failed this Nation that it was sworn to protect. I am grateful for my colleagues stepping up time and again in a bipartisan way to try to fill the gap created by the failure to lead by the executive branch. Hopefully, when we do that accounting, it will allow us to learn lessons. For now, this Congress has to soldier on and do our best to muster a Federal response that, if not for our actions, would be practically nonexistent.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, like other Senators, around this time of the year, I am used to being with folks from home who are traveling to Washington, DC. Between spring break trips and industry fly-ins, spring is normally a very busy season here at the Capitol. I always look forward to seeing both new and familiar faces and spending time with my constituents and talking about the challenges they are facing and the changes they would like to see coming out of Congress.

Yet, as we all know, this is not a typical springtime in Washington. Normally busy sidewalks and hallways are largely empty, as our constituents hunker down at home while we continue working to get them the help they need. Just as Texans have adopted new routines to meet social distancing requirements, so have I, as have all of us.

I know I am not alone among my colleagues when I say that over the last few weeks, I have logged some serious hours on phone calls and video conferences with folks across Texas. Actually, I have been a little bit surprised at how efficient it is in terms of reaching large numbers of people, and I

think it will probably change some of the ways we work here and some of the ways we act with our constituents here in the future.

I spoke with those in the medical field about the ongoing challenges to our frontline healthcare workers, the progress toward developing a vaccine, antibody tests, and the like.

I have talked with the Texas Farm Bureau, our farmers and ranchers, our grocery store workers, and our food bank employees about the need to make sure that all Texans can access the food they need, especially during a time like this.

I have talked with mayors, county judges, and other leaders in our communities about the work they are doing.

I was listening to our friend and colleague from Connecticut who believes that the response needs to be coming out of Washington and that we all need to simply fall in line according to the dictates of the national government. Well, it raises interesting questions about the Constitutional Convention and the agreement to have a Federal system, not a national system. We have sovereign States that have their own sphere of responsibility. Our cities and counties are best able, in my view, to respond to local conditions.

Rather than a command and control response, what we have had in Texas and I dare say in most other places has been a collaborative approach. Working with the national government to provide the resources and some of the guidance is very important. But our Governors, who control the National Guard, which has come out to help do testing, help stock food banks, and help build temporary hospital facilities, and our mayors and county judges and local officials have really done an outstanding job. I am very proud of the work they have done. We haven't just taken orders on high from the Federal Government; we worked together, hand in glove, with the Federal Government.

Of course, I talked to countless small business owners across our big cities and small towns and everywhere in between about the financial strain caused by the pandemic, and it is significant, to say the least. Many, of course, were forced to close their doors or dramatically scale back their operations, and many have had to make hard decisions to stay afloat.

I was just emailing with a friend of mine in Dallas who has ownership in a company that just declared chapter 11 bankruptcy. Our small businesses are the heart and soul of our communities. They are our favorite locally owned restaurants; the florists we call upon on anniversaries, birthdays, and other holidays; the drycleaners, the barber-shops, the gyms, the pharmacies—all the places we have been going for years. They feel like an extended part of our family. They are part of what make our communities unique, and they are a huge driver of our economy.

In Texas and across the country, small businesses employ nearly 50 percent of the local workforce. For many of these workers, the closures and cancellations brought on by the coronavirus have put their livelihoods in jeopardy, with many losing some or all of their income and many, their jobs entirely.

As the Senate was working on our third response package back in March, we knew that without a serious investment in our small businesses, the result would be catastrophic. That is why we created the Paycheck Protection Program through the CARES Act to provide cash flow assistance for our small businesses. As we know, those low-interest loans can be used to cover everything from payroll, to supply chain disruptions, to rent or mortgage. And if the employers are able—I underline the word “able”—if they are able to keep their employees on the payroll until June, then much of those loans can be turned into grants.

During my calls and video conferences with chambers of commerce and small business owners throughout Texas, I have been able to talk about the benefits of these loans and how to access them. Small Business Administration staff have joined me on dozens of these calls to answer technical questions about the loan program and other types of assistance offered by the SBA, which has been really valuable and appreciated by everyone.

Small businesses in my State have jumped at the opportunity to take advantage of the PPP loans and start talking with their banks and gathering up paperwork and going through the formal application process.

As we know now, it became quickly obvious how popular the PPP program was and that it would exceed the funding levels after 2 weeks. That indicates the kind of demand and the kind of need and that our response was actually hitting the target. But after 2 weeks, the first \$350 billion was exhausted and depleted. From that first \$350 billion, 135,000 small businesses in Texas received loans—more than any other State. That program brought approximately \$28.5 billion to Texas small businesses and protected thousands of jobs.

Well, we know, after a little bit of jockeying back and forth with the House, Congress finally replenished the Paycheck Protection Program with an additional \$320 billion, and that money is flying out the door as we speak.

You don't have to look far to see why this program is so popular.

Valerie Gonzalez-Handly owns Delicious Tamales in my hometown of San Antonio. Like other restaurants across the country, her business struggled as the stay-at-home orders were put in place. Delicious Tamales closed for 2 weeks last month but was able to reopen because of the \$232,000 loan they received through the Paycheck Protection Program. All 38 employees returned to work. Valerie called the Pay-

check Protection Program a “life saver.”

For patients at a clinic in Tyler, TX—another PPP loan recipient—these loans could be a literal life saver. Bethesda Health Clinic provides healthcare services to low-income and uninsured Texans in the Tyler area. The clinic doesn't receive State or Federal funding, and one-third of their budget comes from the Hangers of Hope thrift stores they operate, which were forced to close. The clinic had to furlough their employees in order to survive the financial squeeze but was able to take advantage of the Paycheck Protection Program. Krysti McWha is the chief financial and operations officer, and she said this has erased a lot of worry for the clinic and allowed the furloughed employees to return to work. It has also enabled them to continue to serve the public during a time of heightened healthcare concerns.

The Paycheck Protection Program has been vital to Texas small businesses and I dare say to the Nation's small businesses. I am glad Congress, working together as we should during a time of national emergency, was able to provide this lifeline and replenish these funds when they ran dry.

That is not to say, though, that this program has been implemented without a hitch. When you do something this big and this fast, there are bound to be some hiccups. We expected there would be these small holes and gaps in what was needed, and over the last few weeks, those have become pretty clear.

One of those issues is the tax deductible expenses for the businesses that take advantage of these loans. Businesses are normally able to deduct wages and other business expenses from their taxable income, but the notice issued by the IRS said small businesses cannot deduct these expenses, which is exactly the opposite of what we intended to do. Just to give an idea of how harmful this could be, if a small business's payroll during the 8-week period covered by a loan were \$100,000, that amount could not be deducted as a business expense when they file their taxes.

Our goal with this legislation was to help—not hurt—to help small businesses remain solvent and keep their employees on the payroll so they can recover from this pandemic as soon as possible and be ready for what I hope is a v-shaped bounceback in our economy once we defeat this virus. We certainly didn't intend to make next year's tax season a nightmare or to add to the burdens of these small businesses. Yet, based on the IRS's guidance, that is the path we are headed down.

We have to right this wrong. Yesterday, I introduced the bipartisan Small Business Expense Protection Act with the chairman and ranking member of the Finance Committee, Senator GRASSLEY and Senator WYDEN, along with Senator RUBIO, who chairs the Small Business Committee, and Senator CARPER, who serves, as I do, on

the Finance Committee. This legislation will clarify that small businesses can still deduct expenses that were paid for with a forgiven paycheck protection loan from their taxes. Without this clarification, small businesses will be up the creek without a paddle when they file their taxes next year.

This program was created to reduce the financial barriers our small businesses are trying to overcome, not to add more. This bipartisan bill has already received support of the American Institute of CPAs—certified public accountants—and is critical to ensuring America's small businesses receive the full benefits intended by Congress in the Paycheck Protection Program.

As we continue to provide relief for America's workers and small businesses, it is critical that this fix be included. Texas small businesses saw the Paycheck Protection Program as a lifeline during this incredibly challenging time. Let's not make them regret grabbing ahold of it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I ask permission to speak for up to the full 10 minutes.

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

Mr. KAINE. I rise to discuss the next steps the Senate should take in dealing with the COVID-19 global pandemic.

I applaud the bipartisan result Congress has shown in passing four important pieces of legislation to provide trillions of dollars of aid to Americans in the midst of this catastrophe.

My heart goes out to people who are suffering. When we were last here voting sort of near midnight on March 25 or early in the morning on March 26, 675 Americans had then died of coronavirus. Now, more than 72,000 have. In the few weeks we have been away, the number of deaths has increased by more than 70,000. Millions have been diagnosed. Those numbers are rising every day.

The crisis has been the most severe economic shock our Nation has experienced in decades, even more severe than the economic collapse of 2008–2009.

Madam President, just a personal privilege. I know four people who have died of coronavirus.

Jeanette Galliano, my brother Steve's mother-in-law, died in a senior facility in New Orleans in the last few weeks.

Lois Shaver. Lois is the mother of one of our closest friends, the godmother of our middle son. Lois died in a nursing home in Fairfax County in Northern Virginia in the last few weeks.

Gerald Glenn was a minister, a bishop, and pillar of the Richmond faith community. He was somebody I appointed to boards when I was Governor. Senator WARNER did the same. Bishop Glenn passed away of coronavirus right after Easter.

Dolson Anderson was a longtime friend. His wife Linda was one of my

agency heads when I was Governor. As Dolson was providing care for Linda after knee surgery, he contracted coronavirus, and after 16 days on a ventilator, he died.

There are two other names. My next door neighbor, Dean DeForest. My wife Anne and I have lived next to Dean and Mary Ruth for 28 years. Dean died after 2 weeks, after a long battle with lung cancer, not coronavirus. But what coronavirus meant for Dean and so many like him was he couldn't have family with him in the normal way. He couldn't have a funeral or a memorial service or family gathered to grieve in the normal way because of people's worry about infection.

Then there is Lorna Breen. Lorna was a Charlottesville native who was working as an emergency room physician in New York Presbyterian and was so stressed out by what she saw. She developed coronavirus. She went back to the hospital to work as soon as she could, and it was too much for her. She went home to be with her family in Charlottesville, and about 10 days ago, she died by suicide after facing the tremendous burden of being a first responder.

I want to mention all of them. All of us—everyone in this Chamber, everyone who works here—have direct personal connections. The suffering is massive, and it is likely to continue. Because it is, Congress should do more. The American public expects us to, and we shouldn't let them down.

What should be our next priorities? One way to look at the legislation we already passed is that Congress has provided aid to five basic pillars: aid to individuals and families; grants to small businesses and nonprofit organizations; loans to medium and large size businesses; aid to local and State governments; and aid to hospitals, healthcare providers, and the healthcare system.

The three bills we passed in March made major investments in each of these five pillars. By April, we realized that the depth of the crisis was so great, we needed to do more. While we realized that our action was going to be partial rather than comprehensive, we did step up to do more to provide support for two of those five pillars—small businesses, hospitals and healthcare providers.

After providing \$350 billion in forgivable loans for small businesses under the CARES Act, we added another \$370 billion in April for small businesses through additional loans, through the PPP program, SBA's EIDL grant-loan program, and a new set-aside directing resources to small businesses through smaller financial institutions.

And, recognizing that this is fundamentally a public health emergency, we also added \$100 billion in new health funds—\$75 billion for healthcare providers and \$25 billion to enable the United States to finally support development of a competent and comprehensive testing program.

We did not hesitate to act in providing more resources to two key pillars—small businesses and our health system—and that tells me what our next step should be. We should show the same willingness to direct more resources to individuals and families, as well as State and local governments.

Individuals and families are hurting. Thirty million Americans have filed for unemployment. People have lost jobs. Some have businesses that may never reopen, and they have seen other unplanned expenses for healthcare or childcare, as local schools have closed. Rent and mortgage payments, car payments, utility bills, food and medicine—these expenses continue, and the pressure on working Americans is intense.

When we passed the CARES Act in March, I was struck by the fact that the PPP program for small businesses was \$350 billion, but the total direct payments for families was only \$295 billion—about 85 percent of the business grant program.

Given that we just added another \$370 billion in aid for small businesses, I think we should add an equal amount for individuals and families. Whether this is a second round of direct payments or a combination of direct payments and other supports—childcare, rent and mortgage assistance—we should show the public that we value the needs of families and individuals as much as we value small businesses.

And the second thing we should do is to provide more assistance and flexibility to State and local governments. The CARES Act provided \$150 billion in block grant funding to States and localities, but this \$150 billion was limited for use to only deal with unanticipated costs connected with COVID-19.

Here is an odd thing. The funds for businesses were specifically designed to help them deal with revenue losses so that they could remain in operation and avoid layoffs. The hospital and healthcare provider funding was designed to help deal with revenue losses experienced as we postponed elective surgeries and clinical visits. The funds were designed to avoid layoffs. The aid to individuals was designed to help families cope with lost wages and lost salary.

But the CARES bill would not allow State or local governments to use funds to backstop lost revenue, and that is having serious consequences.

I was a mayor and a Governor. I know that 46 States have a fiscal year that starts on July 1, and that means that most States and local governments are working on their budgets right now. They have to project income and expenses for the next year and write their budgets accordingly.

So what are State and local governments seeing? Massive declines in tax revenue. Sales taxes are declining. Meals taxes, lodging taxes, income taxes—all are declining. Jurisdictions are trying to figure out the extent of the likely decline, and though it is

hard to know with certainty, the revenue drops are sizeable.

In Virginia, the town of Abingdon is predicting a revenue loss of about 15 percent; Fredericksburg, more than 10 percent; Blacksburg, nearly 18 percent. The list goes on and on. The Commonwealth of Virginia is predicting revenue losses of \$2 to \$3 billion over the next 2 fiscal years.

If cities, towns, counties, and States lose revenue, what are their options? Since most government costs are personnel, here is what they will be forced to cut—teachers, police officers, firefighters, EMTs. That is already happening in Virginia and all over the country.

Staunton is proposing furlough days for all city employees, including first responders. Prince William County has removed 31 police, fire, and sheriff positions from their budget. Abingdon is laying off 13 full-time and 64 part-time employees.

Every State, city, county, and town in this country is making the same decisions right now, and it shouldn't be this way. We provided funds to businesses to backstop revenue losses so they could avoid layoffs. We provided funds to hospitals to backstop revenue losses so they could avoid layoffs. We need to allow our State and local governments to backstop revenue losses so they can avoid layoffs.

It is never a good time to lay off teachers, firefighters, police, sheriffs, EMTs—never. But I can tell you that the worst time to do it is a national health emergency. The overwhelming majority of our first responders work for State and local governments. Why would we want to lay them off?

President Trump has said he doesn't want to bail out States and local governments, and he has criticized them. He didn't name-call businesses that wanted help. He didn't say: We will not bail you out. Instead, he wanted to extend the helping hand. His attacks on State and local governments are particularly insulting since the American public is much more satisfied with how their State and local leaders are handling this crisis than how the administration is.

Senator MCCONNELL advanced the idea that States and local governments should consider bankruptcy. He didn't say that about businesses that wanted aid. Promoting bankruptcy, which would mean layoffs and broken promises to pensioners, is heartless.

America needs its teachers and its first responders. This isn't a Democrat or Republican thing. There are as many Republican Governors as there are Democrats. There are as many cities and counties managed with Republican leadership as there are Democrats.

The CARES Act had \$150 billion for general State and local government relief, but we have now done over \$1.2 trillion in relief for businesses. I am glad we are helping our businesses get through this, but don't the communities where we live and work, send our

kids to school, pray and play deserve help to get through this crisis too? Does anyone really believe that we will be better off as a nation in fighting this emergency if teachers, firefighters, police, sheriffs, and EMTs are laid off all over this country?

So I will close in just saying to my colleagues: We stepped up big to refill the tank for small businesses and hospitals. It is now time to step up for State and local governments and individuals and families.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Under the previous order, all postcloture time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Evanina nomination?

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 84, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 83 Ex.]

YEAS—84

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

NAYS—7

Blumenthal	Markey	Wyden
Duckworth	Merkley	
Hirono	Warren	

NOT VOTING—9

Brown	Moran	Schatz
Burr	Murray	Stabenow
Leahy	Sanders	Whitehouse

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Illinois.

DACA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I spent 5 weeks in my home in Springfield, IL, following orders—good ones—to suggest that I had to get out of circulation and so should everyone else. It was an interesting moment. My wife and I think it may have been the longest stretch we had ever spent under the same roof together. We got along, which is good, and I got to field the neighborhood a little more than I usually do as I travel back and forth almost every week.

I got to know the people a little more, waving from a distance. I looked around and noticed that almost every lawn had a sign on it saying: "We love healthcare workers." Many people had signs in their windows to back that up too, and we should. These doctors, these nurses, and these people who work in nursing homes caring for the elderly and making certain they are in a good, safe environment are important, and they are risking their lives for the people whom we love. We thank them over and over. But there is one part of that group that I would like to highlight for just a few moments on the floor of the Senate. I want to spend a few minutes talking about one special group of healthcare workers—immigrants.

One in six healthcare and social service workers—3.1 million out of 18.7 million—are immigrants. When they come on television and give us a breakdown of what is going on in emergency rooms and the likelihood of our success in communities in dealing with this coronavirus, you must notice so many times and think that they may be newcomers to the United States. Many of them are.

These immigrants are playing a critical role in the battle against this pandemic. Yet the President of the United States and many around him continue to disparage immigrants, falsely claiming that they are just a drain on society, that all they are doing is taking our jobs away and we really wouldn't miss them if they were gone. So I came to the floor today to tell a story about one of them, an immigrant health hero. I will be joined by some of my colleagues who have similar stories to tell.

We are inviting people to share their own stories on social media using the hashtag "immigranthealthheroes." I

will put up the hashtag here so that if anyone wants to check in, they can do so.

Many of these healthcare workers are young immigrants who came to the United States as children. They are known as Dreamers. They are American in every way except for their legal immigration status. They were brought here at an early age by parents who didn't give them a vote on the decision, grew up in the United States, went to our schools, sometimes all the way through college and professional school, want to make a life in this country, have no criminal record, and are just looking for a chance.

It was 9 years ago when I joined Republican Senator Dick Lugar on a bipartisan basis asking President Obama to use his executive authority to protect these Dreamers from deportation. He responded and created the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA.

DACA provides temporary protection from deportation for Dreamers if they register with the government, pay a substantial fee, and go through a criminal background check. More than 800,000 Dreamers came forward and received President Obama's DACA protection.

DACA unleashed the full potential for these Dreamers that they never dreamed they would have, and they started contributing to America as soldiers and teachers and small business owners.

More than 200,000 DACA recipients are now categorized as "essential critical infrastructure workers"—"essential critical infrastructure workers." Who came up with that name? It is the definition of President Trump's own Department of Homeland Security. One out of four of these DACA protectees are essential critical infrastructure workers, and among these essential workers are 41,700 DACA recipients in the healthcare industry. They include doctors, intensive care nurses, paramedics, and respiratory therapists.

But on September 5, 2017, President Trump repealed DACA. Because of that action by the President, hundreds of thousands of Dreamers face losing their jobs, but, more importantly, they face being deported, many to countries they barely remember, if they remember at all.

The courts stepped in and blocked the President from enforcing this DACA decision, but he took on the appeal of that decision, and now it is in the Supreme Court, just across the street.

I was proud to lead 172 current and former Members of Congress on a bipartisan brief asking the Supreme Court to rule against President Trump's repeal of DACA. These young DACA recipients are being protected while the case is being considered by the Supreme Court, but a decision could come down any day—could come down any day—that basically makes these young people subject to deportation and takes away any legal right

they have to work. If the Court rules in favor of President Trump on DACA, 200,000 essential American workers will be sidelined and deported, even as we fight this pandemic.

Last month, I sent a letter to the President—37 of my colleagues joined me—urging him to extend the work authorization for DACA recipients, not to make their future depend on what happens in the Court. The President has the authority to say that, at least until the end of the calendar year—or beyond, I hope—we are not going to deport these young people, and we are not going to take their jobs away, particularly those in the healthcare industry.

But if you consider President Trump's attitude toward immigrants, you know he is likely to forge ahead with his decision to deport the Dreamers. That means we have to do our part.

I worked with Republican Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, to include a provision to automatically extend work authorizations for DACA recipients in the CARES Act that Congress just passed a few weeks ago. We presented it to the leaders on a bipartisan basis. We had the approval of Senate Democratic leader CHUCK SCHUMER and Speaker of the House NANCY PELOSI, but not the Republican leader in the Senate. He stopped us from extending this protection. I don't know what his situation is in Kentucky, but I can tell you that in Illinois, we need every one of these healthcare workers we have today. We can't afford to lose them. To think that 41,000 DACA recipients and another 11,000 TPS critical healthcare workers would be deported would mean that many Americans who count on these great professionals are going to get less care and perhaps terrible results.

As Congress debates the next legislation to address the COVID-19 pandemic, I will continue pushing for this provision. It is not too much to ask that if these people simply want to be working in ERs and hospitals, risking their lives for all of us, that they at least have the peace of mind to know that they can stay until the end of the calendar year. That is all I am asking for. Is it too much to ask? Some of them are suffering, and their families are suffering too. All they want is the authority to stay here.

Last year, the House of Representatives passed the Dream and Promise Act, based on the Dream Act, with a strong vote. Senator MCCONNELL has refused to call it in the Senate. It could help us. I wish he would consider it.

I have come to the floor over 100 times and told the stories of Dreamers. I don't think there is any better way to make the case—meet them, know them, realize what they brought to America and what they bring each day.

Today, I want to tell you the story of this man. His name is Manuel Bernal. He works in the emergency department at the Advocate Christ Medical Center.

Manuel was brought to the United States when he was 2 years old. He grew up in Memphis, TN. He always wanted to become a doctor. He wrote me a letter, and he said:

Early on, I developed an appreciation for the medical profession when I witnessed the compassionate care received by a loved one at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Manuel graduated in the top 10 percent of his hospital class. He was a leader of several high school honor societies. In his spare time, he was a swimmer, a football player, and volunteered at the St. Jude Club and the Key Club.

He continued his education at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He graduated summa cum laude in biology with a minor in chemistry. In college, he worked as a medical scribe for doctors in the emergency room at a small community hospital in Chattanooga. After this experience, he decided he wanted to go all the way. He wanted to become an emergency room physician. He continued his education at Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine.

Allow me a few seconds to praise this wonderful school. He was one of dozens of DACA recipients at Stritch, which was the first medical school to admit DACA students. They do not receive any special treatment in the selection process, and they are not eligible for a penny in Federal financial assistance. Many of them borrowed money from the State of Illinois to complete their medical education in the hopes that once they are licensed, they can come back and practice in our State, which they promise to do.

Here is what Manuel says DACA means to him:

DACA has undoubtedly opened up many doors for me. It meant allowing me to obtain my dream of serving others through emergency medicine. If DACA ended, I would be forced to stop doing not only what I love doing but what I trained so hard to do.

Today, Dr. Manuel Bernal is an emergency room resident at Advocate Christ Medical Center in Chicago, one of the busiest trauma hospitals in our city. His supervisor told him he did not have to treat COVID-19 patients because he is only a resident, but he stepped forward and volunteered to do it anyway.

Manuel's DACA is set to expire in October, 5 months from now. Will America be stronger if this doctor leaves? Will they be better at Advocate Christ Medical Center, the trauma hospital, if Manuel was forced to leave this country? I can't imagine anyone would answer yes.

Manuel and hundreds of thousands of other Dreamers are counting on the Supreme Court to reject President Trump's abolition of DACA and counting on us who serve in the Senate to solve this crisis President Trump alone created. As long as I am a U.S. Senator, I will continue to come to the floor of the Senate to advocate for Manuel and for thousands of others

who simply want a chance to prove themselves to earn their way into America's future. It would be an American tragedy at this moment when we face this national emergency to lose these brave and talented young people. They are saving lives every day, and they are risking their own to do it. Can we ask anything more of anyone else in this country? We must ensure that Manuel and hundreds of thousands of others in our essential workforce are not forced to stop working when their services are needed now more than ever.

Ultimately, we need to pass legislation that is just common sense, that says these young people who came here as kids and have worked doubly hard under the greatest of pressures and have made a success of their lives, like this young man, can stay in America and be part of our future. He is truly a healthcare hero, and he is an immigrant. He is an immigrant healthcare hero, and there are thousands just like him across America. We need them now more than ever.

I see that Senator CORTEZ MASTO is here. I know she wants to speak on this subject.

I yield the floor to her.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Nevada.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

DACA

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I rise, along with my good friend and colleague, the senior Senator from Illinois, to stress the importance of what is happening in this country right now and who is on the frontline during this healthcare crisis and why we need to support them. There is no doubt.

I just came from Nevada. There are so many essential workers who are risking their lives, as well as their loved ones, to provide essential care and help for individuals, not just in Nevada but across the country. We are talking about healthcare workers. We are talking about transit drivers, sanitation workers, first responders. We are talking about those who are working with the grocery stores, showing up every day to make sure that individuals in need can have the groceries they so require during this healthcare crisis.

So much is at stake right now. I do not want to forget all of those State and local government workers. Right now in my State, there are so many

State workers who are showing up to ensure that individuals get the essential paycheck or the expanded unemployment insurance that we fought to make sure they can receive, and they are showing up, as well.

I, too, stand with my colleague because I think it is important that we recognize not only our healthcare workers but some of those who need extra help from this legislature. We have spent, unfortunately, the last 3 years of this administration attacking them. These are our immigrants in Nevada and across this country who are actually going out every day and risking their lives to help others in need, and they are working in our healthcare.

One of them I rise to talk about today is Anna Ledesma. She is a DACA recipient in Nevada, and she works in a pediatric ICU in Nevada as a nurse, in Las Vegas. Anna has been in the United States since she was 7 years old. She got interested in medicine because an aunt who was a nurse thought it would be the perfect career for her. Her aunt was right. Anna loves biology and she loves learning how disease process works. But, most of all, Anna loves her patients. She said: "I love connecting with them over Disney stuff." Anna will tell you: "I think I'm a good pediatric nurse because at heart, I'm still a kid too."

All across Nevada, immigrants like Anna are working on the frontlines to help others in need during this healthcare crisis. They are working as teachers for children learning from home. They are staffing retirement homes, taking care of at-risk seniors in the middle of a pandemic that targets our elders. They are harvesting, they are shelving, and they are cooking food for all of us.

More than 200,000 DACA recipients in the United States are on the frontlines of healthcare, education, agriculture, and other essential jobs. There are almost 5,000 of them in Nevada alone among the 12,000 Nevada DACA recipients. These are our friends, and they are our neighbors.

Yet this administration continues to demonize them with anti-immigrant rhetoric and has turned their lives upside down by trying to end DACA. These are the young professionals at risk if the Supreme Court upholds President Trump's decision to terminate DACA.

These young men and women have grown up in our communities, and they are giving back. Even in the face of their uncertain futures, they are still showing up to work each shift and still demonstrating by their everyday heroism that they belong here.

Now, more than ever, we need to understand that those who come to America in search of a better life don't diminish us. They enrich us. You can see how cruel and twisted the immigration debate in this country has become if you just think about this: In the middle of a worldwide health crisis, when

they should be focused on keeping their patients alive and limiting their own exposure, the 27,000 DACA recipients in healthcare have to worry about their own legal status.

Anna says that the health crisis her hospital is facing has almost managed to push out the fear that is always in the back of her mind about attacks on DACA and attacks on her future—almost, because it never really goes away. A few weeks ago, Anna was transferred to other parts of the hospital to help adult patients with COVID-19. She told me about the utter isolation of these patients who are fighting for their lives far from their loved ones. She told me about former University Medical Center friends and colleagues, now in New York and in Seattle, who are witnessing the same scenes.

Lately, the number of children suffering from COVID-19 has increased in Nevada. Anna is back in the pediatric ICU, where patients are mostly asymptomatic. With these healthier patients, it is easier to do what she does best, which is to teach kids the things they need to know about a procedure or an operation they are facing, distracting them and making them laugh.

We need to let Anna do her job. We need to let the thousands of immigrants who are on the frontline right now continue to do their jobs. We must allow her to keep serving the only community she has ever known. We need to create a pathway for citizenship for so many like Anna. We need to give them all the tools they need to keep themselves and the rest of us healthy.

Anna's story is an American story—one of struggle, courage, and sacrifice for your community in order to build a brighter future for those who come after.

I am going to continue to fight for DACA recipients and immigrants like Anna and everyone else who has contributed, not just in my State but in this country, to not only enrich all of our lives but to continue to contribute to our economy and to make our lives better. The least we can do is to give them peace of mind and let them know that the only country they have ever known is one they can stay in forever. That is my fight. I hope that is the Presiding Officer's fight and of many of my colleagues. This is something that must be done. We have to pass legislation to make sure Dreamers in this country and their parents have every opportunity to stay and find that pathway to citizenship. They are already contributing.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague from Nevada. Anna's story is so touching. This young girl, concerned about her own future, worried about deportation, gets into a giving, caring profession and risks her life in caring for those who may be suffering from COVID-19. To think some-

one would question whether we want that kind of person in America's future is beyond me.

Thank you for telling that story. It is an important part of the RECORD.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. DURBIN. This week, amid the devastating coronavirus pandemic, we saw what world powers are supposed to do—join forces to raise funds to research, manufacture, and distribute a vaccine and treatments. This makes obvious strategic and lifesaving sense, being both the moral and strategic thing to do. All of us joining forces and working together will help speed up efforts and the eventual discovery and distribution of a coronavirus vaccine that we all desperately seek. Many of us believe that until that day comes when that vaccine proves to be effective and safe and is widely distributed, we are going to still see what we call our normal lives compromised. So there is no greater priority. This effort will save lives around America and around the world.

Who knows where that vaccine is going to be discovered, produced, or distributed? I want America in on this conversation from the start and end on the collective efforts. Clearly, other world leaders understand this. So when there was an effort to raise \$8 billion for the discovery of this new vaccine, they had a virtual global telephone conference. Our allies in the European Union and Norway offered to give \$1 billion each toward this goal. Who was absent from this critical effort to save lives around the world, to discover this vaccine, including the distribution of it to those who need it in every corner of the world? Which country did not participate in this global virtual telephone conference? The United States of America.

In yet another shortsighted, missed opportunity to address the coronavirus, this administration refused to participate. America was missing in action when leaders around the world came together with the determination to find and distribute a vaccine against coronavirus. The President's supporters in Congress said nothing, focusing instead on judicial appointments and other things on their mind.

Given this President's penchant for blaming others but not himself for any mishandling of this viral contagion, maybe his dereliction of duty in this global conference should come as no surprise, but it does because of the devastating consequences that could result. What does this mean for America if the United States sits on the sidelines while other countries set out to discover this lifesaving vaccine?

Well, we still continue to have some of the best researchers in the world at the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the many university and private researchers around this country. Many NIH-funded researchers have

spent years studying coronaviruses. Perhaps their knowledge could be helpful with these other countries in quickly developing an effective vaccine. In fact, some clinical trials are already now under way by the National Institutes of Health. I want to commend Dr. Francis Collins, who heads up NIH, and, of course, Dr. Anthony Fauci, a friend of many years, for their amazing work. But it is quite plausible—it is even possible—that the best vaccine may turn up in another country.

There are efforts under way in England and Germany and in many other countries to find this vaccine, as well. In a rush to research and validate a vaccine, ramp up production, address global allocation and supply needs and ensure affordability and access worldwide, will the United States be standing on the sidelines again? When the United States pursues a go-it-alone—not just “America first” but “America only”—approach, while the rest of the world is working together, where does that leave us?

Remember, it hasn't been that long ago when the United States first opted to develop and distribute its own American coronavirus test kits that turned out to be faulty, instead of choosing the World Health Organization's test kit, which was available at the time. That set our Nation back at least a month, up to 6 weeks. In fact, many believe we still haven't recovered from that critical first misstep by this administration.

Even when his own incompetent response was increasingly obvious, President Trump turned and tried to place all the blame on the World Health Organization, even cutting off all U.S. funding to this critical international body with decades of experience in dealing with pandemics.

The New York Times columnist Nick Kristof starkly wrote last month: “Thousands of Americans would be alive today if President Trump had spent more time listening to the World Health Organization instead of trying to destroy it.”

Don't get me wrong, WHO and many international bodies are imperfect and make mistakes, and they are often only as strong as their member states are willing to help make them or help fund them.

The World Health Organization first warned of the coronavirus on January 4, issuing increasingly urgent warnings in February, while the President was saying publicly that the issue “was totally under control.” American personnel at the World Health Organization were also sending warnings back to Washington about the threat. What was the President's response? On February 10, he said of the coronavirus: “When it gets a little warmer, it miraculously goes away.”

On February 27, the President said: “It's going to disappear. One day, it's like a miracle, it will disappear.”

Well, more than 2 months later, we are still waiting for that and praying

for that, and 70,000 Americans have died. The WHO is a critical lifesaving body that helps eradicate polio, reduce the number of women and children who die in childbirth, and stem malnutrition. The WHO has led the historic global vaccination campaign to eradicate small pox.

When it was issuing coronavirus warnings, the President and all of us should have been listening. Instead, the President ignored them and chose to walk away from the World Health Organization, undermining its international efforts and, ultimately, giving more global leadership to, of all nations, China, which is only more than happy to step in when the United States steps away.

We should be increasing our investment and leadership at the World Health Organization as one of the many efforts to stem this virus and not cover our ears and walking away from it.

The World Health Organization's efforts to halt Ebola are an example of what its work can do to save lives at the outbreak of a pandemic and stop one from reaching the United States.

Presidents Obama and George W. Bush understood this need for global health engagement. I was proud to rally to President Bush's call to stem the scourge of AIDS around the world through the historic PEPFAR program. It was a bipartisan, international, global effort—the world first, not just America first. Many of my Republican friends in the Senate supported these efforts, and we need them now with this coronavirus outbreak.

I was equally proud of President Obama's efforts to set up infectious disease prevention systems and his leadership on the Ebola crisis.

Presidents Bush and Obama understood the traditional leadership role of the United States in such matters and how important it was for the world to know that we were engaged and involved.

Sadly, so much of the world looks at us in dismay today as President Trump undermines American Governors who are doing their best to try and save lives, and refuses to take any responsibility, snubs our allies, and withdraws from global efforts.

That is why I plan to introduce a resolution here in the Senate calling on the United States to join this important global vaccine and treatment effort—something I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support.

Can we put aside our political differences for a moment and agree on one basic thing? Wherever this vaccine is to be discovered, we pray that it will be done quickly, effectively, and safely. We want the United States in on the effort, whether it is discovered here in our country or in another country. We want to be at the table to help support the research and development efforts. We want to be at the table when the good news of the discovery of this vaccine is delivered. We certainly want to

be at the table when it comes to questions of manufacturing and distributing this vaccine around the world, and especially here in the United States.

Standing by on the sidelines with our arms folded, chins jutted out, and saying it is America first or else—this is the wrong moment for it. This is a global challenge. It is a global solution. We don't know which country God will bless with the ability to come up with this vaccine. Whatever it is, we want to be at that table with them in its development and distribution.

Let's remember that this global pandemic and any real solution involves more than just our great country. We cannot isolate ourselves from this international race to find treatments and develop a vaccine. Doing anything else will only waste more time and cost lives.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a Washington Post article of May 5, 2020, on the subject.

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

[From the Washington Post, May 5, 2020]
U.S. SKIPS VIRTUAL VACCINE SUMMIT AS WORLD LEADERS PLEDGE BILLIONS TO EFFORTS

(By William Booth, Carolyn Y. Johnson and Carol Morello)

LONDON—World leaders came together in a virtual summit Monday to pledge billions of dollars to quickly develop vaccines and drugs to fight the coronavirus.

Missing from the roster was the Trump administration, which declined to participate but highlighted from Washington what one official called its “whole-of-america” efforts in the United States and its generosity to global health efforts.

The online conference, led by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and a halfdozen countries, was set to raise \$8.2 billion from governments, philanthropies and the private sector to fund research and mass-produce drugs, vaccines and testing kits to combat the virus, which has killed more than 250,000 people worldwide.

With the money came soaring rhetoric about international solidarity and a good bit of boasting about each country's efforts and achievements, live and prerecorded, by Germany's Angela Merkel, France's Emmanuel Macron, Britain's Boris Johnson, Japan's Shinzo Abe—alongside Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu and Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

“The more we pull together and share our expertise, the faster our scientists will succeed,” said Johnson, who was so stricken by the virus that he thought he might never leave the intensive care unit alive last month. “The race to discover the vaccine to defeat this virus is not a competition between countries but the most urgent shared endeavor of our lifetimes.”

A senior Trump administration official said Monday the United States “welcomes” the efforts of the conference participants. He did not explain why the United States did not join them.

“Many of the organizations and programs this pledging conference seeks to support already receive very significant funding and support from the U.S. government and private sector,” said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity under White House rules for briefing reporters.

Public health officials and researchers expressed surprise.

"It's the first time that I can think of where you have had a major international pledging conference for a global crisis of this kind of importance, and the U.S. is just absent," said Jeremy Konyndyk, who worked on the Ebola response in the Obama administration.

Given that no one knows which vaccines will succeed, he said, it's crucial to back multiple efforts working in parallel.

"Against that kind of uncertainty we should be trying to position ourselves to be supporting—and potentially benefiting from—all of them," said Konyndyk, a senior policy fellow at the Center for Global Development. "And instead we seem to be just focused on trying to win the race, in the hopes we happen to get one of the successful ones."

Conference participants expressed a need for unity.

"We can't just have the wealthiest countries have a vaccine and not share it with the world," Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said.

"Let us in the international community unite to overcome this crisis," Abe said.

Russia and India also did not participate. Chinese premier Li Keqiang was replaced at the last minute by Zhang Ming, Beijing's ambassador to the European Union.

The U.S. official said the United States "is the single largest health and humanitarian donor in world. And the American people have continued that legacy of generosity in the global fight against covid19."

"And we would welcome additional high-quality, transparent contributions from others," he said.

Asked three more times to explain why the United States did not attend, the official said he already had given an answer.

The U.S. government has provided \$775 million in emergency health, humanitarian, economic and development aid for governments, international organizations and charities fighting the pandemic. The official said the United States is in the process of giving about twice that amount in additional funding.

There was one major American player at the virtual summit: the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which promised to spend \$125 million in the fight.

"This virus doesn't care what nationality you are," Melinda Gates told the gathering. As long as the virus is somewhere, she said, it's everywhere.

Scientists are working around-the-clock to find a cure or treatment for the coronavirus. The World Health Organization says eight vaccines have entered human trials and another 94 are in development.

But finding an effective vaccine is only part of the challenge. When it's discovered, infectious disease experts are predicting a scramble for limited doses, because there won't be enough to vaccinate everyone on Day One. And deploying it could be difficult, particularly in countries that lack robust medical infrastructure.

Those that have begun human trials include a research project at Oxford University in England, which hopes to have its vaccine ready in the fall. The university started human trials on April 23. "In normal times," British Health Secretary Matt Hancock said, "reaching this stage would take years."

Conference participants expressed hope that by working together, the world will find solutions more quickly—and they can then be dispersed to all countries, not only the wealthy, or those that developed vaccines first.

Many of the leaders stressed their support for the WHO. President Trump announced last month he was cutting off U.S. funding

for the WHO because he said it had sided too closely with China, where the coronavirus arose. Trump says Chinese leaders underplayed the threat and hid crucial facts.

Public health analysts have shared some of those criticisms but have also criticized Trump for cutting off funding.

Peter Jay Hotez, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine, said the United States has always been the primary funder of new products for global health. The country invested \$1.8 billion in neglected diseases in 2018, according to Policy Cures Research, more than two-thirds of the worldwide total.

Hotez said the United States shoulders the burden of investing in global health technologies, while countries such as China do not step up.

"More than one mechanism for supporting global health technologies—that may not be such as a bad thing," he said. "If it was all under one umbrella, you risk that some strong-willed opinions would carry the day and you might not fund the best technology."

Hotez is working on a coronavirus vaccine that uses an existing, low-cost technology, previously used for the hepatitis B vaccine, precisely because he is worried about equitable distribution of the vaccine.

"I'm not very confident that some of the cutting-edge technologies going into clinical trials, which have never led to a licensed vaccine before, are going to filter down to low- and middle-income countries anytime soon," Hotez said. "I'm really worried."

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to add one last thing. Yesterday, we had a telephone conference with Bill and Melinda Gates. They were part of the summit that the U.S. Government boycotted, and they pledged to spend \$125 million of their own money in this fight to find a virus vaccine as quickly as possible. Let's join them. Let's join them as a nation—Democrats, Republicans, Independents, those who vote and those who don't—all of us who understand that the sooner this vaccine is found, the sooner it is proven safe, and the sooner it is distributed, it will be the best for America and for the rest of the world. It isn't just America first. It is America involved, America committed, America willing to work with the world to find a solution to one of the greatest public health crises of our time.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IMMIGRATION

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the floor today in the midst of this national crisis, this pandemic, to talk about one hero among, of course, many.

First, I thank my friend Senator DURBIN for his tireless leadership on a very important topic—and that is the topic of immigration—and for his tak-

ing the lead in bringing us together today to recognize heroes in healthcare during this coronavirus pandemic.

As many of you know, this pandemic is personal for me. My husband John was hospitalized with the coronavirus not too long ago, and although he is a great person and I am so proud of him for coming through it all and giving his plasma recently, he is actually not the hero I am referring to. I am talking about an immigrant doctor who is on the frontlines of the coronavirus pandemic in Rochester, MN. She has asked that her name not be used publicly because she is applying for a green card. She came to the United States from her home country for postgraduate medical training and completed not one but two fellowships in critical care and pulmonary diseases at the Mayo Clinic, which happens to be where my husband gave the plasma, which we hope will save other lives.

Under normal circumstances, an immigrant doctor who completes his or her postgraduate training in the United States has to leave the country for at least 2 years when their residency is complete. Now, let's look at that again. They have studied in an American medical school, they have completed their postgraduate training in the United States, but then they have to leave the country for 2 years when their residency is complete, just at a time when we need more doctors and more healthcare professionals and not less. Why? Because our immigration laws require them to be outside of the country for 2 years before they can apply to come back here on a work visa. But under the Conrad 30 program, doctors—and that is named after Kent Conrad, the Senator who once represented North Dakota. Since he left, I have taken this on, with many of my colleagues, to continue this program and make sure it gets reauthorized, and we would like to see it expanded.

Why did he get involved in this in North Dakota? Well, that is because they had a shortage of doctors in rural areas, and under the Conrad 30 program, doctors who commit to caring for patients in an underserved area like rural communities or other areas that may be underserved, including urban areas, if they face a shortage of doctors, these doctors are allowed to start practicing in the United States immediately without having to wait 2 years.

I just keep repeating this. They got their training in the United States. They got degrees in the United States. That is why for years I have led bipartisan legislation—which has been endorsed by the American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association, and the National Rural Health Association—that would extend this program and allow international doctors trained in the United States to remain in the country if—if they practice in underserved areas.

It was through this program that this hero I am talking about today, this immigrant doctor, was able to stay in

Minnesota and eventually began practicing at the Mayo Clinic as a critical care specialist, where she sees patients from all over rural areas of southern Minnesota. She was working in the intensive care unit when the first coronavirus cases started coming through the door.

Critical care and pulmonary disease specialists are some of the most in-demand doctors during this pandemic, and as one of these specialists, this doctor has been managing patients on ventilators, patients with kidney failure, and patients with blood clots. She has cared for coronavirus patients on oxygen, and she manages the team that resuscitates patients whose hearts have stopped. This immigrant doctor has literally saved lives.

Her hospital regularly provides telemedical support to other Mayo Clinic facilities, and they even helped a hospital in Georgia. And when the Mayo Clinic received clearance to provide assistance to a hospital in the Bronx where the medical staff was stretched dangerously thin, as we see on TV every single day, she volunteered. This immigrant doctor volunteered during her free time using the hospital's telemedicine equipment. Talking about her service during this pandemic, she has said: "This is not a job, this is a calling. We do this for love."

Her requirement to work in an underserved area as a condition of the Conrad 30 program ends this year. She has no plans to move and to leave our country and to stop providing care to patients if she can help it. She said: "I love Minnesota. I hope Mayo never lets me go." I hope that too. She is an American hero, and we could use a lot more like her.

Over the last 15 years, the Conrad 30 program has brought more than 15,000 doctors to underserved areas, including many rural areas that are short on doctors and rely on the program to fill the gap. I have been at VA hospitals in other parts of the country, and their No. 1 ask was this because they don't have enough doctors in the rural areas where their clinics are located to serve their patients.

This is a commonsense program with bipartisan support. I introduced a bill to reauthorize the program, which we have successfully done in the past. I introduced a bill to reauthorize it with Senator COLLINS and Senator ROSEN, and it has 15 cosponsors. Listen to the names here: Senators KING, ERNST, CRAMER, COONS, BLUNT, CAPITO, BALDWIN, WYDEN, THUNE, MERKLEY, WICKER, CARPER, and PAUL. What brings all these Senators together? It is not a common ideological belief on many issues; it is because they are looking out for their States, and they want to save the lives of people in their States, especially during this pandemic, by allowing doctors who have been trained in the United States of America, who have gotten their degrees, who have done their residencies here, to be able to stay in our country.

Today I am asking all my colleagues to support its inclusion in the next piece of legislation that is coming our way that we must pass to address the coronavirus.

I have also called on the administration to take action to increase the number of doctors who are here to help fight this pandemic and help alleviate the serious strain this pandemic has placed on our healthcare system.

First, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services should resume expedited processing for employment-based visas for doctors. On March 20, USCIS announced a freeze on expedited processing during the pandemic, which would exacerbate our shortage of doctors, especially in underserved rural areas. With Representative BRADLEY SCHNEIDER from Illinois, I led a bipartisan group of 24 Senators—I again thank Senator DURBIN, who has been such a leader on these issues, for his support for this—and 13 Members of the House in asking USCIS to expedite processing for doctors again. We still haven't received a response.

Let's think about what has been happening since we sent that letter on March 20—the increasing number of deaths in the assisted living homes, including those in rural areas, which have been plagued by this pandemic, which have lost dozens of their residents to this pandemic. Think about some of the rural areas that have been hit hard that simply don't have the hospital beds or the ventilators. Think about all that is going on, the thousands and thousands of people who have lost their lives. And still we wait. March 20—a bipartisan group of Senators has asked for help since that freeze on March 20 was put into place. We await a response.

Second, USCIS should give flexibility to health systems so that doctors on employment-based visas, like the Minnesota doctor, the hero I just told you about today who couldn't even have her name released when she is managing teams of people—not because she is here illegally, no; because she wants that chance to get her green card. Like that doctor whom I told you about today who can provide care where they need it the most, many doctors in similar circumstances are willing to volunteer to treat patients in the hardest hit areas, just like she did when she volunteered to help with the hospital in the Bronx. They are worried that doing so and leaving their home hospital will put their immigration status in jeopardy.

Last month, I led a letter with Representative TOM COLE, ABBY FINKENAUER from Iowa, and BRADLEY SCHNEIDER, that was signed by 18 other Senators—again, including Senator DURBIN and 29 House Members—urging USCIS to waive restrictions so that doctors can practice in crisis locations. Once again, we have not received a response. Is that because the President wants to take a back seat again to the Governors of this country, when, in

fact, Federal policy is holding back not just equipment from going where we have hot spots but now also actual doctors and medical personnel? And if they are good enough to get a degree in a medical school in the United States and if they are good enough to practice in some areas of the country, they are not good enough to practice where we have the hot spots?

Rather than acknowledging the help that immigrant doctors are providing during this public health emergency, this administration's rhetoric has made them feel, well, unwelcome. That would be a euphemism. It is one of the reasons that Minnesota doctor asked that I not use her name.

When discussing the process of applying for a work visa, she noted: "At the same time you're taking boards [medical boards] you are also filling out hundreds of pages of paperwork to prove that you're worth keeping."

OK, picture this. While she is saving lives, managing the team that resuscitates people, volunteering her time to help at the hospital in the Bronx, caring for patients on ventilators and bringing their hearts back to life, she somehow has to prove to our government that she is someone worth keeping. She said: It is very disheartening at times.

But she isn't giving up on us. She said: All of us who come from foreign countries, we are here because we want to be here. We love this country.

For these brave men and women, it is so important that we do everything we can to protect them and their loved ones, not just from the uncertainty that comes with being immigrants but the risk of the current crisis.

So many of our immigrant medical personnel have died, not just in our country but in other parts of the world as well. They have died saving lives for people in the country that they love.

We need to ensure that all our doctors and frontline health workers have supplies and equipment, like face masks, gowns, and shoe covers, so that no one has to reuse their supplies and risk exposure to the virus.

We need to implement a real national testing strategy so that we can get ahead of the virus and target resources accordingly. The testing blueprint announced by the administration on April 27 falls well short of a comprehensive testing plan and puts all responsibility for testing on the States.

Two weeks ago, I was proud that we passed an interim relief package that included \$25 billion to expand our Nation's coronavirus testing capacity. It will go a long way to ramp up molecular and serum testing—something that Mayo was a leader in across the country—to diagnose active virus infections, identify antibiotics against the virus, and support contact tracing.

This investment is a start, but we know there is so much more work to be done to ensure Americans across the

country have access to accurate testing technologies and innovative treatments that they need to reduce the risk of infection.

Our healthcare workers on the frontlines, including our immigrant health heroes who sacrifice so much in the pursuit of medicine and service, deserve better. When the President goes after immigrants in his press conference, do you know whom I keep thinking of? I keep thinking of this doctor, this hero in my home State who risks her life every day managing these patients and managing teams of doctors because of her know-how and because of the trust that an institution like the Mayo Clinic has put in her. What are we thinking? These heroes should be heralded and not condemned.

In closing, I want to share this quote from President Franklin Roosevelt: "Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the assessment that something else is more important than fear." That is exactly what these immigrant health heroes are doing. They chose to be in this country and to come here because, yes, they wanted a good life for themselves and their families, and they knew they were going to have to work hard to make that happen. They got a degree. They are on the frontlines. Then they chose to keep working and to save lives during an incredibly dangerous pandemic.

They understand that courage is not the absence of fear—of course, they are afraid when they go to those jobs—but, rather, the assessment that something else is more important than fear. Their life's mission, to them, is more important than fear. Saving someone's grandma or saving someone's husband—they decided that is more important to them than fear. They choose service over fear.

What I am asking our colleagues to do here is—we understand there is anti-immigrant sentiment out there. We know it. We hear it every day from the President. But I am asking you to actually believe that your service is more important than that fear that has been stoked. Certainly, a number of our colleagues decided that when they were willing to get on that bill—Democrats and Republicans—to reauthorize the Conrad 30 program to allow these immigrant heroes, these doctors who were trained in our country, to be able to keep doing their work. Let me again mention the names of the cosponsors of this bill: COLLINS, ROSEN, KING, ERNST, CRAMER, COONS, BLUNT, CAPITO, BALDWIN, WYDEN, THUNE, MERKLEY, WICKER, CARPER, and PAUL, and, of course, I mentioned Senator DURBIN. They are willing to do that, and there is so much more we can do. We still await an answer for why the visa processing for these healthcare workers was suspended.

Service first, fear last—that is what these doctors did, and that is what we must do first. That is what we must do now.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CARES ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I take this time to go over with my colleagues the status of where we are in regard to the provisions in the CARES Act that relate to small businesses.

First, I want to make it clear that our top priority for America's businesses, whether they be small businesses or large businesses, is to get this COVID-19 behind us, to stop the spread of this deadly disease, and to give confidence back to the American people that it is safe to pursue their economic desires and therefore to have businesses be able to go back to a situation where they have customers and they can be open for business. We have appropriated significant resources in order to make sure we do what is right financially to deal with this deadly disease, and we have provided the tools to protect our economy.

Let me talk a little bit about the attention to small business. I am pleased and proud to be the ranking Democrat on the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee. I serve with Senator RUBIO, who is the chairman of the committee. We have worked together, Democrats and Republicans, in order to help small businesses during this pandemic. We did that because we understand that small businesses do not have the same degree of financial resiliency that larger companies have. When they are going through an emergency situation, when they are going through a pandemic, they don't have the same capacity to get credit and to get the cash they need that larger companies have.

We also understand that small business is where the job creation mostly will take place in our country. Most jobs are created through smaller companies. We also understand that smaller companies are more innovative. They come up with new and creative ways in order to build our economy. But we recognized that we had to do something to make sure they could survive through the pandemic, and that is where the CARES Act came in.

On a bipartisan basis, we crafted new tools under the Small Business Administration to help small businesses. I was proud to work with Senator RUBIO, Senator SHAHEEN, and Senator COLLINS. The four of us got together well before the CARES Act was brought to the floor of the U.S. Senate in order to deal with what is necessary to keep small businesses afloat during the pandemic. New tools were created, and the

CARES Act enacted tools that can help small businesses survive this pandemic.

The program that is getting the most attention is the Paycheck Protection Program, the PPP program. In the original CARES Act, we authorized and appropriated \$349 billion for that program, and then we replenished in a second round an additional \$310 billion, for a total of \$659 billion for the PPP program.

It is a program in which small businesses go to their financial institution and take out a 7(a) loan, which is a loan that is provided for under the Small Business Act, but there are private lenders that lend the money to the small businesses. But we made special provisions in this law to provide 100 percent Federal guarantee so that there is no risk to the borrower. We made it easier for companies to be able to get those 7(a) loans and provided additional lenders for other communities. We expanded the 7(a) program to include not only conventional, for-profit small businesses but also nonprofit businesses, as well as individual proprietors.

To date, the program has been very successful. Over 4 million 7(a) loans have been made under the Paycheck Protection Program. But we have concerns. Let me talk a little bit about the concerns we have.

One of our concerns is that it has been difficult for the underserved community, the underbanked community, to be able to get these 7(a) loans as a priority. We failed them in the first round. It was the larger companies that had established relationships with their banks that got priority on the processing of these loans, so that minority businesses, women-owned businesses, businesses located in rural communities, and veteran-owned businesses did not receive the same attention as the larger businesses did.

So our first priority is to find out exactly how the program is working. We need to get the data. We need to know where these loans were made. We need to know what industries got the different loans. We need to know the location of these loans. We need to know the size by dollar value and by number of employees.

We also need to know how the different provisions of the PPP program have been allocated by loans. For example, we made exceptions on the 500-employee limit for those companies that come under the NAICS code 72—this is our hospitality industry—and for good reason: They are really hurting during this time.

We need to know how many hotels and how many restaurants qualified under the NAICS code exception. We need to know how many franchisees have been able to get loans. We need to know how much went to the nonprofit community and how much went to the self-employed community. For that reason, I have introduced legislation with Senator SHAHEEN and Senator SCHUMER to require the SBA to make

that information available to us on a very regular basis. We need to get that information in order to properly carry out our oversight function.

Today, the Small Business Committee in the Senate had a briefing with Secretary Mnuchin and Administrator Carranza, and we talked about one of the problems we have in administering this law. There is a self-certification; that is, the business makes the certification that they meet the standards and need under the act. We are concerned that there may have been abuses. But until we see the information, it is difficult for us to do our respective oversight.

We don't know if we still have adequate funding. To date, there has been somewhere around—over \$500 billion, closer to \$600 billion has already been lent out; \$550-some billion has already been lent out under this program. Are we going to need more money? Until we get this information, we don't know what the future funding needs are going to be. So we need to be able to get that information so we can provide adequate resources.

I must tell you that I think every Member of the Senate has been approached with ways this program can be made better. There are questions as to why certain groups are eligible and others are not. There is going to be a need for modification in this program, and it will be difficult for us to make those modifications unless we get the data we need to understand where the loans have been made.

There is a second program that was created under the CARES Act and expanded under the CARES Act, and that is the EIDL Program, the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program, and we added a grant program to that. The initial CARES Act provided \$10 billion. When we went through the second round of funding, we put another \$60 billion into this program. Why did we do that? Because the loan program under EIDL, which is an emergency program for businesses that have suffered disasters, and COVID-19 qualifies as that, gives relief beyond just the 8 weeks of payroll and the other expenses covered under the PPP program. So small businesses need help with working capital. They can get that help under the EIDL Loan Program. A small business might need an immediate influx of cash. They can get that under the grant program under EIDL, up to \$10,000.

Yes, when the programs were announced, they were overprescribed. We had over 1 million small businesses make immediate applications for these funds, and the Small Business Administration was overwhelmed. That is why we provided, in addition to the original \$10 billion for the grant program, another \$10 billion. And in addition to the loaning capacity, we put another \$50 billion into that program so they could execute \$300 billion worth of loans.

But it has been very slow at the SBA, which is a concern of ours. Only about

50,000 loans have been successfully processed under EIDL. We just got that information today. Yes, there have been over 1 million grants given out. Most of them have been under \$10,000, whereas the maximum we thought most small businesses would get is a \$10,000 grant.

There needs to be better coordination between the PPP program and the EIDL Program, and we must make sure that the window remains open. But, today, a non-agricultural business that applies for an EIDL loan is told that they can't process that loan, that the window is basically closed. That is not the intent of Congress. We want to make sure those windows are open.

So I come here today to tell you that the first priority is that we need to get the facts, and we need to fix the program to make sure it works well. But I want to qualify that by saying how proud we are of the men and women at the SBA and Treasury. They are implementing this new program literally overnight and working 24 hours a day in order to make sure this program can work. We recognize that, and we recognize this is a major challenge, but we need to make sure the program works right.

We need oversight and accountability, and we can't do that oversight and accountability unless we get all of the facts and unless we get the information. Those who abuse the program need to be held accountable. I was pleased to hear Secretary Mnuchin talk about that today in the briefing to our committee. We have to have oversight as to the program working efficiently. We also have to make sure that we take care of the problems that we have seen in the program with the underserved community. We can do a better job in reaching those businesses that are traditionally underserved.

We specifically allocated \$60 billion of PPP to smaller financial institutions. We now need to make sure they really get to the institutions that can serve minority small businesses, that can serve those smaller of the small businesses, that can serve women-owned businesses and veteran-owned businesses and businesses located in rural communities.

I would suggest that we need to make sure that the CDFIs and minority depository institutions get their fair share of allocations under the PPP program in order to reach these hard-to-serve small businesses.

Yes, we do need to look at how we can modify the program to make it work even better. We recognize that when we crafted the program, we thought that 8 weeks would be enough. We now know that our economy in most of the country is not going to be up and running within that 8-week period. How do we improve that program?

I want to tell you that we all recognize that the Paycheck Protection Program may not be enough. Even in conjunction with the EIDL program, it may not be enough because businesses

are not returning to normal within the next few weeks. We need to design a program that provides the next level of relief to those small businesses that really need it, those that have had significant revenue losses, those small businesses that are really small businesses, like the mom-and-pop-type businesses, and, yes, those small businesses that have traditionally been left out—the minority-owned businesses, and women-owned businesses, and businesses in smaller, rural communities, and veteran-owned businesses.

The success of the PPP program and the success of the EIDL program were because Democrats and Republicans worked together in a strong bipartisan manner. We are continuing to do that in the Small Business Committee.

I applaud our leader, Senator RUBIO, for reaching out to work together between Democrats and Republicans. We need to continue to work together and enact the type of oversight that is necessary for the programs that are currently existing and make the modifications so these programs can work effectively and well.

We heard today about the inflexibility of the 8-week period and how we need to deal with that. We need to work together to improve the program and to make sure that the next level of help for small businesses is targeted to those small businesses that really need the help so that we can continue to have an economy that can grow, that can create jobs, that can be innovative, and that protects the ability of small business owners to be able to participate in our economy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, let me first of all join with my good friend, Senator CARDIN, in appreciating the incredible work that really so many Federal employees have done to make these programs work.

I was with the SBA Director about 2 weeks ago on Friday. She said that in the first 14 days of the PPP program they did 14 months of loans in that 14-day period. I thought many times that Secretary Mnuchin set these high standards for how quickly we would get to each of these points and probably only later realized just how difficult it is to get the Federal Government to move.

In this case, the Federal Government has moved. The Congress has moved working together. We didn't have the element of time on our side. We really had to move quickly. I think we all knew when we were doing so that we were going to have some miscalculations, whether it was the amount of money for PPP or a program that wasn't quite as refined as it needed to be. And, hopefully, we are right now trying to look at not only how we have filled in the blanks on the programs that we so quickly dealt with in March, but also to look forward to May and July and try to figure out what the

economy is going to need and where we are going to be in this healthcare crisis in May and July.

Certainly, a number of our States are beginning to reopen. States like Missouri are opening in what I think is exactly the appropriate way. The Governor looked at the whole State and said: We are going to step back from our initial order in the entire State. We are going to remove that order. He has worked thoughtfully and carefully with the mayor of St. Louis and the mayor of Kansas City, the county executives of bigger counties, and the mayors of Columbia and Springfield, and he has not gotten into fights with local officials about situations where they have every reason to know more than he does, just like the Governor of Missouri has every reason to know more than somebody in Washington, DC, about when our State should reopen.

I am glad the President has let Governors have that sort of authority. I think in most States, including mine, Governors have stepped back and let local officials assert their view of what should happen in the area where they have been elected to be responsible. With that combination of things, we are going to reopen and begin to see the economy reconnect again like it has not connected for the last couple of months.

At the same time, we have these two fights. One is to save the economy and one is this important fight against the virus. I think in the 2 months since we went home after the CARES Act, I spent most of my time working on the healthcare side of this. Senator ALEXANDER is the authorizing chairman for these healthcare programs. I am the appropriating chairman for most of them. These are programs that, certainly, in the last months, Americans have learned a lot more about than they ever knew about before. Who knew the Centers for Disease Control, or the CDC, was doing what it was doing or that Health and Human Services has the responsibility they have or how troublesome it was if we let our hospitals get out of whack in terms of income and continuing expenses? All of those things happen.

One of the things I worked hard on has been to get that research funding at the National Institutes of Health, where Dr. Fauci runs only one of the double handful of agencies at NIH, the infectious disease part of that.

The American people are beginning to see those things that the government does and also see that the government, like every other family or every other institution, doesn't respond to crisis with immediate efficiency, but does begin to work its way toward a solution. Senator ALEXANDER and I have spent a lot of time together with FDA and all those other agencies. What we see happening is a real willingness with the total backing of the Congress to get out there and try to move these solutions at a faster rate than we ever

have before. Dr. Fauci said early on that if we developed a vaccine in 18 months, that would be the world record for a U.S.-developed vaccine from a new virus to having a vaccine available.

We are trying to do everything we can, not only to meet that potential world record but to beat that world record. How are we doing that? We are doing that with things like the shark tank concept at NIH, which we specifically put \$1 billion behind in the last bill—\$1 billion for a place where people would bring ideas for a vaccine, for therapy, for testing, and you would have that shark tank environment begin to evaluate which of those ideas deserve the help of the Federal Government to push them forward faster.

How would we push them forward faster? Obviously, a vaccine is what we need to fully emerge, in my view, from this. We need therapies to deal with people who get the virus before we have the vaccine and testing to know if you had it or not. Hopefully, we would have some level of immunity or testing to know whether you have it. We have to do better on all of those fronts.

We need tests that are easier to take and get a quick response. We need millions of these tests that millions of Americans will take more than once. If you are at a factory, if you are in a close situation, or if you are on a college campus, the administrator or the boss or you may decide: I want to take that test every week, and I want to call my mother every week from this college campus and tell her I have taken the test again like I told you I would. I was OK last week. I am still feeling OK. Nobody in my dorm is sick. It is OK that I am here.

That is the kind of thing that will get us started. How do we get to that quick, easy response test? How do we get to that therapy, and how would the shark tank work?

People bring in ideas. Let's assume on testing that the shark tank decides there are really 10 of these that have real potential to work and we are going to begin to advance them. Then, at some point, there are four of them that are still one or two steps away from being fully vetted, but you don't want to wait until they are fully vetted to go into production. That is where another billion dollars in an agency called BARDA is. Take that billion dollars and find a private partner and say that we are going to produce all four of these tests. We are going to have all four of these tests ready 30 days from now when we know which one works because 30 days really matters—30 days in getting back to school, 30 days in generating the economy. If you are 30 days ahead of where you would have been otherwise, you can put a lot of money behind that and still pay only a fraction of what we have been putting behind trying to stabilize the economy. If two of them work in that 30-day period of time when you are going ahead and manufacturing all four of them,

they are just ready quicker than they would have been otherwise.

We hear often the idea that failure is not an option. This is a case where actually failure is almost a certainty on some of the things you are trying. If you are not failing, you are not trying enough things. If all you did was advance four things that were going to work anyway, you really didn't take much of a chance to fast forward or dual-track what you are trying to do.

We are working hard to get ready to have those tests so when you have a normal blood draw to check your cholesterol, when you turn that into your doctor, you could ask your doctor to also check for COVID-19 if they don't ask you if you want to check for COVID-19. They could say you have it.

Hopefully, by the time that test is available, they can say you have it and you have enough of the antibodies or you have enough of what it took to fight this off that you should have immunity up until the time we are likely to have a vaccine. Many Americans then know they are out there with no danger to themselves or no danger to others. Many Americans then know that, in all likelihood, they can safely visit somebody they haven't been visiting for a while because they didn't want to take a chance of carrying a virus that now they know they can't possibly get. So those kinds of things will make a real difference in our economy.

On therapeutics, if we don't have the vaccine for it yet and if you get the disease, we need to find and fast forward the manufacturer of the therapeutics that we think are most likely to work.

It is the same with vaccines. On all those fronts, we are making headway. I think we are probably testing sophisticated testing for the antibodies and for a diagnostic test. We are having lots of interest in that. There is a lot of private sector interest for an antibody test, for this coronavirus test, where particularly, if scientists can say that you have it and you have this level of antibody that you can't get it again. Who wouldn't want to take that test?

The authorizing chairman of the Appropriating Committee, Senator SHELBY, Senator ALEXANDER, Senator MURRAY, and I all believe that the government should pay for that test. We have said the government should pay for that test if your insurance company will not. Most insurance companies said they would pay for that test. It seems to me that if you have millions of customers and a guaranteed payer, this is one that the private sector is quickly about to take care of on their own. Thank goodness for that. This is one of those times when the most sophisticated pharmaceutical-medical science laboratory system in the world begins to pay off. That is what we are going to see here.

We have other areas where companies are working together like they haven't before. I know they told our friends at

the National Institutes of Health that if we can test their experiment better at our facility than they can, bring it over here to test it over here. We need an all-out effort to get this economy going again. We need an all-out effort to get people's health secure. Once that has happened, I think we will see all those things come together.

I think we made great strides. I haven't heard anybody say in some time on this issue that Congress just hasn't provided enough resources to do this job on the testing, therapeutics, and the medical device side of this or the personal protective equipment side of this. People looked at what the Congress has stepped up and done and said the Congress has given us the tools.

The administration, the research of scientists of America, American pharmaceutical companies, and the medical companies have to step in. I believe they are stepping in. Let's break some records here. Let's do some things quicker with the same amount of safety that we have done in the past. There is a dynamic need to do this. The American people understand why it needs to be done. People all over the world will benefit from our leadership here. I think we are seeing it.

Hopefully, we can continue on these efforts to have the bipartisan determination to win these two fights: the fight against the virus and the fight for the economy that the American people deserve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, before my colleague and friend from Missouri leaves the floor, I want to thank him for a very thoughtful presentation. I want to thank him for that and for his leadership. I know he has other places to go. I am glad I was here to hear that.

I wasn't sure if I would continue wearing my mask. I saw the Presiding Officer was wearing theirs and I said: Well, I will keep wearing mine, too. All our staff on the floor, including one of the staff who takes down our words for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and folks who accept documents at the desk in front of us are all wearing masks. I was wearing a mask earlier today going into a markup at a business meeting in the Environment and Public Works Committee. They were also wearing masks.

As I was about to go into the business meeting, there was a Capitol police officer there. I said to her: How are you doing today?

She said: I am doing fine.

I said: Any idea how many of our Capitol police officers have been infected and developed symptoms or had the virus at some point in recent weeks?

She said: I believe it is somewhere between 15 and 20.

This came as a surprise to me. We haven't heard that much about it. I have been here to vote several times

this afternoon. I was coming here to say a few words about legislation we passed unanimously out of the Environment and Public Works Committee. I was passing a number of Capitol police officers, people who clean the building, maintain the building, and folks who serve food in the cafeteria so that the people who are working here have something to eat. They were almost without exception wearing masks.

The reason why it is important for us to do that is because they are at risk. We, as leaders, need to exhibit and lead by our example. I know my colleagues endeavor to do that. It is important. These are people who serve our country just as we do. They deserve not just our respect and our thanks, but they deserve our protection. For everybody for whom maybe it is something they are uncomfortable doing, not used to doing, like hand sanitizing, washing their hands every other hour or even more, these are good things, not just for us but for the people who are serving this country here with us in our Nation's Capital.

I did come here today to say those words from my heart, and I wanted to share them with you and others.

AMERICA'S WATER INFRASTRUCTURE ACT OF 2020

Mr. CARPER. I have come today to talk about a couple of bills that the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works reported out today unanimously that would vastly improve our Nation's water infrastructure. What does infrastructure include? It includes the pipes that bring us our water or that take our wastewater where it can be treated.

Infrastructure includes our dams, includes our harbors, our ports, our waterways—all that and a whole lot more.

When we talk about improving our water infrastructure, what we are really talking about is keeping the promises afforded to every American through the Declaration of Independence.

Remember those words: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? The legislation that we acted on today—the two bills that will be combined into one later on, on the floor—called the Water Resources Development Act, the underlying message is that our work today directly reflects those words in the Declaration of Independence: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Certainly, none of those things—life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness—are possible without access to clean water, whether it is to wash our hands or to drink. We can't have life without clean water to drink. The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us of that too—just how important it is to have access to clean water to wash our hands and soap to wash our hands. We are reminded daily—I would say almost hourly—to wash our hands with soap and water. It is a simple yet effective

way to prevent the spread of this deadly, virulent disease.

In our committee today, the Environment and Public Works Committee, Senator SULLIVAN from Alaska talked about the Native Americans who live in his State who don't have running water. They don't have a spigot to turn on. They don't even have the ability to flush toilets. For them, the idea that you can actually do those things is just a dream that they could never imagine being realized. The thing is that too many communities across our country do not have access to clean water because of harmful contamination in their groundwater or water supply pipes.

Sadly, this public health disparity usually goes hand in hand with economic opportunity. While water is the essence of life, it is also an essential part of our economy. More than 99 percent of the U.S. overseas trade—more than 99 percent of U.S. overseas trade—moves through our waterways. Imagine that. Most people would never imagine that. Our Nation's water infrastructure, our ports, our shipping channels, and other related projects support economic growth, facilitate commerce, sustain jobs, and create new jobs as well.

Americans cannot truly pursue happiness without the economic opportunity that comes with having strong water infrastructure, a lot of which we can't see—we have been joined on the floor by the chairman of our committee. There are pipes and wastewater treatment plants and the facilities that clean the water for us; we don't see those. Fortunately, somebody does—somebody builds them, somebody maintains them—in order for us to have that life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.

Well, today, our committee, led by JOHN BARRASSO, Senator from Wyoming—I happen to have the privilege of being the ranking Democrat on that committee—we approved two bills that are going to help us keep those promises laid out in that Declaration of Independence—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2020 and the Drinking Water Infrastructure Act of 2020 will help the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency make improvements to key water infrastructure systems throughout our country. The programs we passed in our committee today will support the Army Corps of Engineers' operation and maintenance of—listen to this—13,000 miles of commercial, deep-draft ship channels—13,000 miles—and 12,000 miles of commercial inland waterways.

I had explained earlier, Mr. Chairman, before you joined, how 99 percent of the cargo that we send to other countries or that comes to us comes by ship. It doesn't come by airplanes; it doesn't come by train. It comes by ships. Those ships don't move without waterways largely maintained by the

Army Corps of Engineers. These are little known projects that keep our economy moving. They are essential to our way of life as well. What comes into the Port of Los Angeles today will be on shelves in stores in the Midwest a day or so later.

In Delaware, we have a port on the Delaware River. It is called the Port of Wilmington, not far from where my wife and I live. It supports more than 19,000 jobs in our region. For a big State, 19,000 jobs is not much. For Delaware, that is a huge deal.

The Port of Wilmington is the United States' top seaport for fresh fruit imports. If you happen to live in the eastern part of the United States and you got up and had cereal this morning with some banana on your cereal, there is a good chance that that banana came through Port Wilmington.

The Army Corps is working diligently with our port on an expansion project that will open a channel to a new containment facility just a couple miles north of the current port along the Delaware River. The Army Corps is responsible for dredging and maintaining access to this new channel which, over time, will support more commerce, more jobs for our region—not just for our State, but for our region. For such a small State, if you were to stand and draw a circle around the house where my wife and I live, in about a 10-mile radius, you cover New Jersey, you cover Pennsylvania, you get pretty darn close to Maryland as well. So the impact will be regional.

In addition to authorizing necessary Corps projects, the two bills that we reported out of our committee today unanimously included authorizing the Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund for the first time since 1987. We used to be able to provide grant programs to fund water projects in States, to help fund water projects, to help fund wastewater treatment projects in our States, and we changed that when Ronald Reagan was President, and then we have these revolving loan funds. The Federal Government replenishes them every now and then. The States invest the money out of those funds, but we haven't reauthorized the Clean Water Revolving Fund which focuses less on drinking water and more on cleaning water, reducing the effluent it is putting out in our community. So many of our communities rely on these funds to improve their wastewater systems.

In the drinking water bill, a corollary, we also authorized more than a half billion dollars to provide critical drinking water infrastructure through the Small and Disadvantaged Communities grant program. I just talked earlier, when I spoke of Senator DAN SULLIVAN's comments at our hearing today, we talked about Native American communities in his State who don't have flush toilets. In a number of cases, they don't turn on the faucets and the clean water just comes out. There are other communities, not just there, in my State at one time, not

long ago, in other States where there are disadvantaged communities, and we have a grant program that we are going to use to help more and more of them—not all of them—and this will help us keep the promise of clean and safe drinking water, maybe not for every American, but more Americans, no matter what their ZIP Code is or what kind of bank account they have.

I think of Matthew 25—I don't care what our faith is—Matthew 25 starts out with these words: When I was thirsty, did you give me a drink; when I was hungry, did you feed me?

Well, when I was thirsty and I didn't have any clean water to drink, what did you do about it? Well, in this bill, we do something about it, and I am proud of what we have done.

As we work to ensure clean water for all, our drinking water bill will continue our work to address what are called "forever chemicals." A forever chemical is a chemical that doesn't degrade, and there is a word that is about a mile long—there are a couple of words that describe it—we call it PFAS. That is the acronym. I am not big on acronyms, but I like this one a lot. There are thousands of "forever chemicals" that just don't degrade in our environment. For the most part, they are not dangerous, but a couple of them are really dangerous, and they can lead to thyroid and liver disorders. They can increase the risk of cancer. They can adversely affect people's immune systems. We have a pretty good idea of which ones they are, and we need to do something about it.

We sought to do that early this year and late last year, through other legislation. We have an opportunity with the bill that we reported out today to do more good work on addressing these forever chemicals. One of the ways is by developing a clean drinking water standard for two of them that are most concerning: PFOA and PFOS. Between today, reporting the bill out of committee, and the time we come back to the floor to debate it here, we have an opportunity, I hope, to do even more good work in addressing that.

Madam President, I know you have a military base in your State. I have been to one or two of them. We have one big military base in our State, the Dover Air Force Base. It is the biggest employer in the central and southern part of our State: 6,000 uniformed and civilian personnel. They have some of the biggest planes in the world, C-5, C-17. It is a cargo base. It has been recognized many times as the best cargo base in the world, best Air Force base in the world too.

About 5, 6, 7 years ago, one of our C-5s took off—they fly around the world—they had a full load of fuel, full load of cargo, and as they took off, the flight engineer noticed that an engine light came on from one of the engines—not a good sign—and the flight engineer turned off—not that engine—turned off another engine, and then he had two engines working and two engines not working.

Long story short, the airplane came around and tried to land again where it had just taken off. It crashed a mile short of the runway, and fortunately, nobody was killed. The fire department came rushing out and foamed down the area and helped put out the fire. Nobody died.

I am sad to say that, when I was on Active Duty as a naval flight officer at a naval air station one morning, driving into work many years ago, there was a huge fire. One NASA airplane, big plane, landed on top of one of the Navy airplanes. It killed everybody. I think one person survived in the whole crash. Again, folks, firefighters rushed out and tried to save lives with this firefighting foam.

The true irony is that the firefighting foam which is used to save lives in air crashes actually, when it rains, it gets washed into the ground and a lot of times ends up in wells and groundwater that people drink and consume, and it creates very serious health results for them.

At any rate, between today and the time our bills come to the floor, we hope to make a lot more progress in adjusting those for everyone.

While millions of Americans rely on the Army Corps projects to safely navigate our waters, stay safe from flooding and storm damage, and reap the benefits of healthy aquatic ecosystems and marshlands, we know impacts of climate change propose a real threat to public safety and to the durability of our infrastructure.

I would like to use the example of Ellicott City, MD—not even 30, 40 miles from here. A couple years ago, within 18 months of each other, they had two 1,000-year floods. What is a 1,000-year flood? It is a flood that is supposed to occur every 1,000 years. We had two of them within 18 months of each other, and we are seeing that kind of extreme weather in places all over the country, and not only does it wreak havoc at our homes and our businesses and our transportation system, but also our drinking water systems.

One of the things that we do in our bill is to address that. These two bills expand grants that will help small and medium-sized communities increase the resiliency of their water systems to natural hazards and extreme weather, like what was experienced in Ellicott City and any number of places around our country.

Before I yield the floor to my friend and colleague, our chairman, JOHN BARRASSO, who is patiently waiting for me to stop talking, I want to thank him again. I already thanked him once, but now that he is here, I want to thank him again. I want to thank him for his leadership and helping us to move this legislation through. We have all heard the saying—I think it was Joe Biden that said it—just because somebody is my adversary or somebody is on the other side of the aisle, they don't have to be my enemy.

We are actually—don't let this word get out in Wyoming—I think we could

say we are friends and we like to work together. Our staffs, most days, like to work together, hopefully. But I want to thank his staff.

I want to thank all the Senators. He and I pleaded with our colleagues from all 50 States to give us their ideas of what should go into this bill, and a bunch of our colleagues—a majority of them—did that. So it is not just something we dreamed up in our committee, but had great input from a whole bunch of our colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, and we were able to put together a bill that passed our committee unanimously.

I just want to mention the names of a couple of people on both sides of the aisle, and they include Richard Russell, Brian Clifford, Andy Harding, Lizzie Olsen, Susan Lucas, Craig Thomas, Beth Lange, Christina Rabuse, Matt Leggett, who worked for Senator BARRASSO; and on my team, Mary Frances Repko, our staff director, Mark Mendenhall, Annie D'Amato, and John Kane, who works harder than just about any person I have ever had the privilege of working with.

Lastly, Senator BARRASSO introduced me last year or so to a fellow from Wyoming who had been nominated to be a very senior official at the Commerce Department, and he had been nominated for a position where he would be Assistant Secretary of the Interior to handle, among other things, national parks, national wildlife refuges, fish and wildlife—big job, important job for all of our States—certainly mine and certainly Wyoming.

During his testimony, Rob Wallace testified, I thought, so well, and it is hard not to like the guy. I liked him almost immediately, but he said these words to our committee. He said: Bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions. That is what he said: Bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions.

I sat there that day thinking: Boy, he nailed it. I have stolen that line—sometimes, I give him credit for it; sometimes, I don't—but think about that. Bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions.

We need the lasting solutions. We especially need them with respect to making sure those words in the Declaration of Independence—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—aren't just words on a sheet of paper or old words on a piece of parchment, but they are real words today, and we have renewed our commitment to them, and we have done that with the legislation we reported out of our committee.

We still have some work to do. Harbor maintenance, we need to try and resolve that—people have strong views, not always in sync with one another—and the legislation on forever chemicals and how do we deal with that in ways that are smart and respect science and enable us to make sure that we better protect people's health.

So these bills, in closing, are a win, win, win, for our Nation's economy, for our public health, and for our environ-

ment at a time we desperately need it. As we face down the COVID-19 crisis before us, I hope that these two pieces of legislation will serve as a model for how we can continue to work together, which is what I intend to do with our chairman.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, before my friend and colleague, Senator CARPER from Delaware, leaves the floor, I will tell you what a privilege it is to work with him, and we have worked together as partners on the Environment and Public Works Committee. As you know, every chair works with a ranking member, and I couldn't have a better partner than I have in TOM CARPER. He has been magnificent in times, always trying to find a right solution that is a bipartisan solution, and we have done it again today on the Environment and Public Works Committee as we passed two major pieces of water infrastructure legislation.

Last year, we passed highway legislation, and he is focused, as am I, on rebuilding for America the highways, the bridges, repairing as well the tunnels, all of the areas—roads, bridges, ports, riverways, reservoirs. I could not find a better partner.

You know, it is interesting he mentioned Matthew 25, and if you read Matthew 25, it was Ben Franklin's favorite Bible verse. What Ben Franklin would say is, if someone chose to live their life by one Bible verse, if they chose Matthew 25, he said, the world would be a better place. TOM CARPER is one who leads his life every day consistent with the teaching and the readings and the writings of the Gospel of Matthew 25.

He mentioned my good friend Rob Wallace from Wyoming, who is now the Assistant Secretary of the Interior overseeing parks, as well as fish and wildlife for the country. Rob always said, as was so quoted by our Ranking Member CARPER, that bipartisan solutions are the best solutions. He is somebody who knows. He worked on the Hill. He worked as a staffer for former Senator Malcolm Wallop of Wyoming and then on the Energy Committee when Senator Wallop was so actively involved in those days in the 1980s and '90s.

But the other thing that Rob Wallace talked about, to which Senator CARPER and I agree as well, is there are lands in this great country that need to be protected and preserved and passed on because, as Rob pointed out that day, he said whether it was John Muir, who carried a stick, whether it was Ansel Adams, who carried a camera, or Teddy Roosevelt, who carried a gun all into these vast areas of our country, they all recognized, no matter what they were carrying, the value that these wonderful lands meant for the people of our country, and we needed to make sure that they were there for generations to come.

I know that the work that Senator CARPER is doing on this committee is meant for generations to come, and it is a privilege to work with him.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come for an additional reason, and that is to tell you that in my home State of Wyoming, we have reopened. We did that starting last Friday. Many States across the country are continuing to do so, and people all across my home State are ready, willing, able, and needing to get back to work. We are doing it safely, we are doing it smartly, and we are following the guidelines set out by the White House.

States all across the country are doing it. Governors and local leaders are reopening, and they are doing it in a responsible way. As of today, over 30 States have reopened. On Thursday, Michigan will reopen. On Friday, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, as well as California will begin to reopen. By this time next week, nearly 40 States will have opened again.

Now, we do hear, on the other side of the aisle, Democrats complaining about wanting to do significant amounts of additional spending. Americans are busy getting back to work. That is where our focus should be. People are packing their lunches. They are taking proper precautions. They are putting on their work gloves. They are earning their keep. They aren't looking for favors. They are not looking for frills from Washington. They just want to do their jobs, and they want to make sure that we do ours as well.

We have spent close to \$3 trillion in this country over the last 2 months, and we have a duty to make sure that money is spent properly and that we got it right. We need to make sure we are here and focused on work-friendly policies, and this doesn't necessarily mean additional spending. It means making it easier for the 30 million people who currently are out of work and who have lost their jobs to get back to work sooner.

Our priorities are America's priorities: rebuilding the economy and jobs, addressing the coronavirus, and helping our health systems. Plenty of dollars have started to go out the door. Many more dollars, already approved, are still slated to go to the American people, to small businesses, to States, and to our healthcare system. The \$3 trillion doesn't get spent overnight. The support we have provided is finding its way through the economy, through the healthcare systems, and through the States to the men and women of America. States are looking at the dollars coming in, and they are figuring out how best to use the resources. They are asking for more flexibility, and I believe they need to have more flexibility in how the money is spent.

Senators and committees are here to make sure that we get this right. We

need to do that through hearings, through oversight, and through confirmations. Just this week, the Senate will be having COVID-19-related hearings in the Banking Committee, in the Homeland Security Committee, in the Commerce Committee, and in the Health and Education Committee. We are just getting started.

Importantly, this is not the time to reshape America along some liberal wish list of ideas that the Democrats have suggested. It is not time to legislate from either Brooklyn or San Francisco. It is not time to veer to the left. It is time to stay focused. The Senate Republicans are here, and we are going to stay focused on the future of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I so agree with the comments that the Senator from Wyoming was just making, and I hear them repeated every day in Tennessee by my constituents.

I thank my colleagues who have asked me this week how Tennessee is doing. You know, we had another terrible storm. It was our third this year. We have had two tornadoes, and we had lots of power outages and damaged trees that were down in Middle Tennessee. The tornadoes, the storms on Sunday evening, and COVID are a lot for anybody to handle, but I think the Senator's point is so well taken.

Wyoming and Tennessee—these are States that are saying: We can do this. We are going to use the resources that are there for us because, yes, we want to get back to work, and we want to get back to normal.

What is normal is a question and the right question for people to be asking because what is it going to look like and how is that daily routine going to be reshaped? How do we give up these worries that we have about health and wellness and safety and protection for ourselves and our families, our employers, our employees, and healthcare workers? All of this goes into the shape of a new routine for the day—the things you worry about, the things you are focused on, about your jobs, about businesses, about the future.

Another point that comes up regularly from Tennesseans was well made by a Wall Street Journal article that ran on Monday, and it was discussing that the U.S. Government would borrow \$4½ trillion this year for this fiscal year. Now, that is something that I think legitimately could be added to the worry list for those of us who are fiscal conservatives, and we are looking at \$25 trillion in debt. We are looking at this debt load and thinking about that in relation to our GDP and thinking about the importance of federalism. We are very concerned about this. We are going to have—CBO says our annual deficit is going to be the highest it has been since World War II.

When we think about that, we have to think about the fact that the

“greatest generation” looked at that, and they said: Let's get in behind this, and let's get that debt down. They were good about that. I think about the parents and relatives and grandparents, and what did they say? If there is a task to be done, let's go do it. That is why they lined up and they fought in World War II, and they reshaped the way our communities worked. They planted victory gardens. They changed their daily routines, and they went to work. They said: Let's get in here, and let's get this job done. They then put their focus on economic growth when they came out of the war, and look at what they accomplished.

So while we think about the economy shrinking and jobless numbers growing and our vulnerable citizens, we have to think about the high price that is being paid there. We also have to think about what it does to our children and our grandchildren because our forebears certainly thought about that for us, and our children and grandchildren deserve no less.

When I am talking with Tennesseans who are stuck at home, and they are watching the news every night and they are listening to what we are saying—they are in on Zoom meetings, and we are communicating with them daily—they have a tendency to say: How did we get here with a situation that is this bad that occurred this quickly? Should we not have seen this coming?

In February, we had some of the best numbers we have ever had economically, and now you look at what has happened in this short transition. And what they will ask is, what kind of breakdown took place in our international order that could have allowed COVID-19 to spread beyond China's borders and into our neighborhoods and our communities?

I have to tell you, they are upset about this. They are angry that lives have been disrupted.

I had a call from a lady who has high school children, and she said: You know, Marsha, I have to tell you, I went to the grocery store, and I looked at where every product was made before I put it in my cart.

The reason she is checking where products are made—she said: I am so angry with China. I am angry with the lies, the deceit, and the lack of information. I am angry that lives have been lost and livelihoods have been lost, and I am angry that my children have missed class days, field days, school sports, graduation, prom, summer camp, and summer jobs. It is a season of their lives that they are not going to recover. It is a loss of life and livelihood.

The order that we had is the reason that Tennesseans are turning to us and they are saying: We expect you to investigate what happened, to review it, to oversee it, and to make certain that our preparation is better and that more forethought is given to how we are going to address this—addressing all of

these Federal agencies and making certain that the bureaucracy doesn't get in the way of the decisionmaking.

At this point, we do know that there are a lot of unknowns, but what we do know is this: The Chinese Government—the Chinese Communist Party—the Chinese Government spent the early days of the COVID-19 outbreak destroying testing samples, intimidating doctors, expelling journalists, hiding information, and lying to the world. You know, it is so interesting that they still have not let the scientists from the CDC into that Wuhan virology lab. They still don't want anybody in there. They lied to everybody about how dangerous this was, and they did that on purpose. Think about it—an intentional act of deception, repeated acts by the Chinese Communist Party to hide something that was an outbreak and try to keep it from the world.

This seems inconceivable, that a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council and a former and likely future member of the Human Rights Council would be so careless with the lives and livelihoods of billions of people, but they did it. If you consider their track record, it does start to make sense because China is not a new problem; it is just a newly recognized problem.

I fear America has forgotten the lessons we learned as we watched the Communist dogma burn its way through Eastern Europe, Russia, and Asia, twisting the minds of ambitious men who leveraged political mass murder as a messaging tool, killing tens of millions of innocent people in the process.

During the Cold War, the divide between the Soviet bloc and the West was pretty clear. We could see that alignment with the Soviets would derail our global fight for democracy. We also caught glimpses of Mao's China, where upwards of 30 million people died of starvation and disease directly at the hands of party officials—not an appreciation for the sanctity of life—one of our first principles and tenets.

Today, the Chinese Communist Party is still following that Soviet playbook, and it is time for the world to remember what that means before time runs out. Although Xi Jinping and the CCP have modernized their methods—they are all about cyber, and they are all about technology—here is what we have to remember: Their philosophy and their goals are exactly the same. They want to dominate the world militarily, economically, and politically. They are wanting domination, and they will step over and run over whatever gets in their way.

What we have to do is to remember that China is capable of funneling mass amounts of cash, equipment, and physical support to developing countries. They are doing it all in exchange for loyalty to the Chinese Communist Party's agenda. For example, debt diplomacy schemes—that is their new thing—debt diplomacy schemes have

ensnared Sri Lanka and Djibouti and other countries in Africa and Asia. Those countries have in turn opened doors to strategically important ports and waterways and granted access to valuable natural resources. To be clear, these are not aid programs; they are tools of manipulation offered to nations in desperate circumstances.

For nations not in desperate circumstances, Beijing has to work a little harder, but they still are working to get the job done. They count on the promise of cheap labor and production and low cost products to open doors with nations that normally are not going to work with somebody with such an abysmal human rights record as China has.

The world is recalling some very hard lessons right now, but there is a path forward. We must secure our supply chains, and we must begin to return these critical infrastructure supply chains to the United States to make certain that we can bolster ourselves and that we are not completely dependent on China for some items that are essential for us.

The pharmaceutical supply chain is one on which I have focused, with Senator MENENDEZ, with our SAM-C legislation. This week, Senator MCSALLY, Senator DAINES, and I introduced the Stop COVID Act to hold China legally liable for the damage caused by the spread of the novel coronavirus. Our colleagues have other pieces of legislation that have the same focused accountability for China and making certain this doesn't happen to us again. I encourage all of my colleagues to look at those.

I also encourage my colleagues to accept that our relationship with China is broken right now and that it was never that great to begin with. But right now, it is broken. It is time for us to realize that we have to treat China as an adversary and we have to protect ourselves as we move forward.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mrs. LOEFFLER. Mr. President, my first priority during the COVID-19 pandemic has been to do all I can to keep Georgians and all Americans safe and healthy. But while at home in Georgia these last few weeks, I have seen that the measures we needed to take to fight this unprecedented health crisis have created dramatic economic and societal impacts.

One in five Georgians is unemployed. In the last 6 weeks, the Georgia Department of Labor has issued more unemployment payments than in the previous 4 years combined.

Hotels in the Golden Isles were seeing 80 to 90 percent occupancy rates at the beginning of March, the start of beach season for our beach communities. As the number of tourists plummeted, the president of our visitors' center described the economic impact as "absolutely devastating."

School districts, like Forsyth County schools, are organizing meal pickups

and food delivery for students who typically rely on eating breakfast and lunch at school.

Then there is the emotional toll combating the virus has taken. A local law enforcement officer told me that his department has seen a dramatic spike in domestic abuse calls. An emergency hotline run by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration saw a 1000-percent increase in calls last month compared to last April.

The full cost of this pandemic remains to be seen, but it is clear we need to look ahead and plan for a future that protects Americans' lives and livelihoods.

As a member of the President's Opening Up America Again Congressional Group, I am putting to work my nearly three decades of experience building companies and creating jobs.

Over the last few weeks, I have held more than 100 calls to hear directly from Georgia hospitals, State officials, first responders, food banks, small businesses, farmers, large employers, nonprofits, chambers of commerce, as well as the President and his administration, to address the needs of Georgians.

With my experience and the feedback I have heard from Georgians, I have developed the USA Restoring & Igniting the Strength of our Economy Plan—USA RISE. This is a plan to bring back our thriving economy. It offers a four-pillared framework for investing in America, growing jobs, and helping families without expanding the grip of the Federal Government. It builds on the success of President Trump's America First agenda.

The USA RISE Plan calls on all of us in Congress to ensure that the more than \$2 trillion of relief already passed in the CARES Act and in phase 3.5 is targeted to the areas of the economy that need it most while providing prudent oversight.

The first pillar, Made in the USA, addresses the fact that for too long, our manufacturing has moved overseas. Now more than ever, we are reminded of how dangerous it is to rely on other countries, especially competitors like China.

The USA RISE Plan calls for incentivizing companies to return to the United States, investing in infrastructure to spur economic development, and having a competitive tax and intellectual property framework to promote hiring and capital expenditures. We need to ensure that America remains the best country in the world to do business.

The second pillar, Grown in the USA, is aimed at supporting our farmers and helping Americans who are seeing empty grocery shelves or local food banks that are depleted.

I grew up working in the fields as the fourth generation working on my family's farm, and I know firsthand the challenges that farmers face even in the best of times. Today, fruit and veg-

etable prices are down about 50 to 60 percent, and cattle and pork producers have been affected by meat processing plant closures and limitations. At the same time, the Georgia Food Bank Association told me they have seen roughly a 40-percent increase in demand for their services. We need to ensure that the relief in the CARES Act is making its way to our farmers and agriculture businesses.

Any future trade deals with China must hold the Chinese Communist Party accountable for their role in spreading the coronavirus and should focus on shifting supply chains back to the United States.

Farmers account for just 2 percent of America's population, but 100 percent of us eat. It is time to harness our agriculture advantage to support our farmers who put their businesses on the line every single day to feed Americans and the world.

The third component of my plan, Hiring in the USA, proposes removing regulatory barriers and cutting taxes to help small businesses keep employees on the payroll and to create jobs. Half of all Americans are employed by small businesses, and these are the small businesses that have been particularly hurt by COVID-19.

Congress has already taken extensive action to provide loans and grants to small businesses like Globalus, a small trucking company in Fulton County, and Jan's Family Daycare in Dalton. I recently talked to daycare owners Bill and Jan Whetstone, who received a PPP loan. This will allow them to keep their doors open and to serve working families. Our economy cannot recover without our small businesses.

My plan also calls for reducing the temptation for trial lawyers to use COVID-19 lawsuits to drain profits from employers at the expense of productive jobs. Local shops and restaurants are the lifeblood of our communities, and there is more we can do to help them.

Finally, we must support families in building strong futures. Right now, too many families have lost their incomes and are struggling to afford their rent and to put food on the table.

The fourth component of my plan is "Families in the USA." It aims to provide targeted relief for families and for children. Among other things, it supports churches that are helping families during this difficult time and other organizations, like YMCAs across our State, which are the largest providers of childcare in Georgia, and they are providing thousands of meals each day to families across our State.

In the last several weeks, we have made great strides in expanding testing for COVID-19. This is a crucial tool for getting back to work. Over 7 million Americans had been testing through Monday. As President Trump noted, no one else, no other country in the world has even come close to this level of testing. This is something we are proud to build on. In fact, the President has

also announced the Testing Blueprint, which is a partnership to help States build out their testing capabilities.

In my State of Georgia, Governor Kemp has partnered with our universities and private companies to expand testing capabilities, and that is now at record levels. Anyone who thinks they may have the virus can use an app developed by Augusta University to screen their symptoms and schedule a test at one of the 66 testing centers in our State.

Testing is a key component to restarting our economy safely, but we must start to adapt to this new reality now. Before this pandemic hit, we saw job creation and opportunity that lifted up all Americans. The four pillars I have outlined are critical to reigniting our economic engine. The USA Rise Plan offers solutions to grow our economy without unnecessarily growing the Federal Government or our deficits.

Americans want to get back to work and back to their lives but safely. While we continue to fight COVID-19 on the health front, we also must look ahead and make plans to rebuild now. I am confident we will because I know that when Americans unite, we rise to meet any challenge.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

SENATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, it is good to be back in session. After 6 weeks away from this place, it is good that we are all together working on some very important things.

In the past 6 weeks, since we haven't been here in session working together, a lot has changed. America has been overtaken, really, not just by the coronavirus but by the economic damage it has caused.

More than 30 million Americans have now filed for unemployment, and most believe we are approaching the highest unemployment we have had in this country since the Great Depression. It is a concern and particularly troubling because, if you think about it, just a few months ago, back in February, we hit a 50-year low in terms of unemployment in this country. So we have gone from a strong and growing economy to one where many people are out of work and many businesses have been shuttered. Some of these businesses tell me they may have shuttered permanently. I hope not, but it has been a tough time. At the same time, churches and schools have been closed.

Some States have begun to reopen their economies, which is fantastic, but a majority of Americans are still living by very strict social distancing guidelines.

I hear constantly from Ohioans about how much this has upended their lives. Sometimes small business owners will tell me a heartbreaking story of how they spent 30 or 40 years building a business, and now they have seen it

devastated. They are in a situation where they have no cash flow and can't keep the business open.

At the same time, a lot of Americans have been teleworking. They have still been working, but they haven't been going to the office or going to the factory. They have been working from home and figuring it out.

Just like everything else, here in the Senate, we have been affected by this pandemic. As I said, we have been shut down for 6 weeks. This started back in March. One of our colleagues actually came down with the virus, but it was really on the advice of health officials and public health experts that we decided not to reconvene. It was probably the safe thing to do at the time.

Again, it is good we are back now. We are back now with the recommendation of the attending physician and other top medical experts. We have been wearing our masks dutifully and when appropriate. We have been keeping our social distance.

My desk is actually over there, but there was another Senator over there, so they put me here, which is good. We have been doing this successfully this week, and that is great because we need to be here representing the voice of the American people.

However, I will tell you, during these 6 weeks when we weren't convening, there was a lot of work to be done too. Yet Congress was unable to do it. Why? Because, unlike probably the majority of the people whom I represent, we don't telework. We work, yes. We were home working hard. But we weren't involved in debates here. We weren't involved in hearings. We weren't involved in debates on the floor. We weren't involved in voting.

During that time period of 6 weeks, by the way, over half a trillion was appropriated. In other words, this body chose to spend over half a trillion dollars—that used to be a lot of money—of taxpayers' money without people being here to weigh in, to vote, to have amendments, or to have debate. And that legislation had to be done because it had to do with helping small businesses in particular but also healthcare providers around the country and getting more testing, which was very important. But wouldn't it have been good had Congress been able to weigh in? But we couldn't. Why? We don't have the ability to remotely vote, much less engage in debate or much less have hearings.

I think we should be able to do that. I think we should be able to meet and discuss things even when we can't physically be here in the Capitol.

REMOTE VOTING

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, a couple of months ago, I introduced legislation here on the floor of the Senate with my colleague DICK DURBIN from Illinois. He is on the other side of the aisle. In a bipartisan way, we said: Let's let Congress vote remotely. Let's

use safe and secure means to do that. The technology is out there to do that. It has to be safe, but let's let Congress weigh in and vote remotely when we can't meet.

These last 6 weeks are an example of that, but it is not just about this pandemic. I have actually been talking about this for 25 years because I believe it is important for Congress to be able to meet when there is any reason we can't come together or shouldn't come together.

After 9/11, a lot of people were more focused on this because a terrorist act—particularly a bioterrorist act—could have the same effect, of course.

There have been periods of time where Congress has not been able to meet here, and there have been other periods of time like during the Cold War, when there was actually a bunker set up in the hills of West Virginia somewhere for us to convene for fear that there could be a nuclear attack. So Congress has thought about this before, but Congress has never been able to put in place the ability for us to vote remotely, for us to have debate remotely, and for us to have hearings remotely. I think that is too bad because we are the voice of the people. We represent individual congressional districts on the other side of the Capitol. We represent individual States here. The Constitution set it up so that we are out here listening to people we represent, and we come here to represent that voice.

The executive branch has its own role, and it is a very important one, but it shouldn't take over the legislative branch role because they are different, and the Founders intended it that way, to have this separation of powers.

By the way, other countries have done this. The United Kingdom has begun to conduct its proceedings remotely. The EU has started to vote remotely—the European Union. There are several other countries that have come up with one way or another to work remotely—to telework, in essence.

By the way, about 14 States have also figured this out so that they can convene meetings and so on, and some of them even vote remotely. So I think it is time to do it.

Last week, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which I chair, had the first remote hearing in the history of the Congress, and it worked really well. We had three witnesses. We had several Members of the Senate participate. The witnesses were all around the country, so we didn't have to call them here to Washington. We didn't have to gather as a group and therefore risk one of us infecting another or exposing us to the coronavirus.

The witnesses were testifying from their homes, from a living room in one case. One of the witnesses actually testified from the cab of a pickup truck because she was at her sister's place

and didn't want to do it in the house. So she got in the pickup truck with her laptop, and it worked great. It worked great. We were able to ask questions and get answers. It worked just like a regular hearing. I was appreciative that the Rules Committee allowed us to do that.

By the way, the technology is, in a sense, off-the-shelf technology because it is their technology. They have it. We didn't have to recreate the wheel. It worked last week. We used it. I think it can be a template for other hearings.

By the way, I am pleased to say that today, I participated in two more remote hearings. Even though we are here in session, we are having remote hearings because it is not wise for us to all gather together with the staff and with the Capitol Police and others. It is safer for us to do this remotely. By the way, both of these hearings went well. One was in the Finance Committee, and the other was in the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee.

By the way, our hearing last week was online. You can check it out at psi.gov. The two hearings today were both online, live-streamed today. This does not mean that you cut out the public. In fact, I would say it is just the opposite.

During these last 6 weeks, we could have had hearings every week and kept the public informed as to what we were thinking and gotten more input from the public in an official way and in a way that was so transparent that everybody could have been engaged in it, if they wanted to, just like C-SPAN, except it is online. This is something we can now do, and I hope we will continue to do it.

I hope we will be sure that, as we do this, we also take serious this idea of not just having hearings and not just having the ability to interact as Republicans and Democrats but actually have the ability to vote remotely when we shouldn't be here. Again, it needs to be safe, and I think we can do that.

I am convinced that if we put our minds to it, the technology is not the problem; the problem is tradition. I am not against tradition. A lot of them make sense. But do you know what? Tradition around here has changed a lot over the years. There didn't used to be a filibuster, as an example, which is how we live right now, to get 60 votes for everything. That is OK. I am not saying it is a bad tradition to have changed, but the point is that we change tradition here a lot, and it is time for us to look at this.

It is time for us essentially to catch up. Most of the people I represent are doing this. To one extent or another, they are teleworking. Most people in America today are realizing that you can actually get a lot done online, remotely.

Today, I talked to some healthcare professionals who were telling me about one of the rare silver linings in this dark cloud that has descended

upon our country. It is the fact that telemedicine has been proved over the past couple of months to be pretty darn effective. In many cases, it has been used because people are concerned or afraid about coming to a hospital or going to their doctor, but they can get the advice through telemedicine.

I talked to some educators today. In fact, I also talked to the Ohio Farm Bureau today. I talked to a mom who is at home with her kids during the day now because her kids are home from school because schools have been closed. We talked about how much she has been able to learn about telelearning and how there is an opportunity here to do more outside of the classroom. It is not that we shouldn't get back to classrooms—I think we should. I think that is an opportunity for kids to interact, which is important. But we are beginning to acknowledge that we can also do more after school in terms of telelearning. So this is just another example of it.

This is a change that I think must be made to prepare us for the realities of this 21st century, where these contingencies come up. It is a pandemic today. It may be something else tomorrow.

By the way, the way our legislation works for voting is that it is temporary. So I don't think this should be the norm. I think it should be only in emergencies and only when the majority leader and the Democratic leader—so in a bipartisan way—decide it is the appropriate thing to do, and then, under our legislation, every 30 days, Congress would have to vote—presumably remotely—to reaffirm it. Otherwise, it ends.

So it would be temporary, it would be in emergencies only, and it would be up to Republicans and Democrats alike at the leadership level to decide it is time to try remote voting and to be sure that we, as the Members of the people's House across the way and the Members of the world's greatest deliberative body here in the Senate, as we are called, have the chance to represent the millions of people we are charged with representing by being their voice here on the Senate floor.

I hope we can, along with the times, change here and begin to be more effective in representing those constituents.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am also here to talk today about the work that is being done to help my home State of Ohio to get through this coronavirus. It is a crisis in so many ways. It is a healthcare crisis, but it has also become an economic crisis and a family crisis. It is affecting everybody in ways that are truly heart-breaking for me to see in so many instances.

I have talked to people who have been unemployed for the first time in their lives and have never had access to the unemployment insurance office.

They have been fortunate. And now they have to.

I have talked to people who started a small business and took a big risk to do that. They have five or six employees—it is a family-owned business—and they have been through the thick and thin over the years, but this one has really knocked them out. They have no income coming because they are in one of these businesses that by government order were shut down and cannot continue to serve the customers.

I have talked to hospitals in a rural area of our State that cannot continue to operate. They have about a week left of cash reserves. Luckily, they are going to get some of this funding that Congress just provided with regard to the phase 3.5, as we are calling it, legislation of the CARES Act. But they are really hurting. They have had to lay off more than half of their hospital staff. They can't do elective surgery. They can't have the normal work they are used to because people aren't coming in to see the doctor. They aren't coming into the emergency room.

The good news is, in Ohio and other States around the country, we are starting to open up and doing so safely. We are doing more testing and that is all good. It has been a tough time.

Like so many Americans, I have been on the phone a lot. I have been on the phone pretty much all day, every day, into the night. A lot of what I have been doing is talking to constituents and talking to stakeholders across the State and hearing their concerns and trying to explain what we are doing here in Washington, how it would affect them and their families, and getting their input as to what we should do, but also I have been working with the White House, and HHS, FEMA, the FDA, Treasury, SBA, the Bureau of Prisons, the U.S. Trade Representative, State of Ohio, and others on corona-related matters to be able to help Ohio companies and help Ohio individuals. We have had some success in that. I am proud of that. In terms of constituents, we held seven tele-townhall meetings in the last 6 weeks where we hear directly from people, thousands of Ohioans. Again, there are a lot of heart-breaking stories and also a lot of really inspiring stories about people who stepped up and helped.

One guy lost his job and decided to go volunteer at a food pantry. He wears the PPE, the mask and the gloves, and he delivers food to people who have never had to worry about food security before because they always had a job. Now, they don't have a job and are waiting to get their unemployment insurance, and they can't put food on the table. Some of them feel funny about going to a food pantry because they have never done that before. He makes them feel more at home, he said, and understanding and more welcomed.

I talked to people who are delivering groceries to their neighbors who are seniors and who are more vulnerable. God bless them. I talked to people who

are making homemade masks at home. I brought some with me on my trip to Washington. They are doing it as volunteers, not asking for anything other than, if you take this mask, you have to agree you are also going to be helping your neighbor.

The frontline workers, the hospital workers, are putting their healthcare on the line for us. They are risking their own healthcare and the possibility of getting this virus to help all of us and to help our grandparents and our parents. God bless them.

I love when the healthcare workers are being held up by everybody. I think today is official Nurses Day. We should all be thanking our healthcare professionals and, specifically today, our nurses for what they do every day in every time period, but particularly during this crisis, where they have been working really long hours and doing everything they can to try to protect us. I appreciate the people who are doing everything else on the frontlines right now, whether working in a grocery store stacking shelves or whether you are driving a truck. I drove my pickup truck from Ohio to Washington on Sunday to be here for this week, and every time I went by a truck, I said thank you just for being out there and delivering the food and delivering the products. We thank those folks for what they are doing, all of them.

One thing I tried to do is to help in terms of explaining what is going on in getting input. We talked to more than a dozen groups out there. I talked to the Farm Bureau today in Ohio, but I also talked to the hospitals, small business owners, food banks, the non-profits, and many others to hear how we can support them during this tough time.

This afternoon, we had a telephone call with some of the largest businesses in Ohio, a group called the Ohio Business Roundtable. They talked about some of the things they are doing to keep their employees safe because some of them are essential businesses. I encouraged them, as I always do, to get your best practices out to all your others business associates. Let them know how we can reopen safely. We are starting to open in Ohio. We want to know it is safe. The best advice will not be from a piece of paper—as important as that guidance is from the White House or the State of Ohio—it is going to be from other businesses who found out things you can do, like stagger the lunch break. That helps to spread people out.

These things might not be obvious, such as do the temperature testing as people come in. Be sure that you are doing everything you can do to explain to people what they can do if they feel like they are getting sick, who they can go to and how they can be sure that they are not infecting others. I think there is an opportunity here to reopen and do it safely.

One reason we are able to reopen in Ohio safely is we have a lot more test-

ing now. Like many States, we didn't have enough testing until recently. Now, we are getting it. We had 3,700 tests per day, 2 weeks ago. Within 2 or 3 weeks from today, we will have 20,000 tests per day, a 600 percent increase. We had to work at it because we were having trouble getting some of the components for testing, particularly the reagent. The State of Ohio, to its credit, with Governor DeWine, reached an agreement with Thermo Fisher, a private sector company taking the lead in providing us a guaranteed supply chain of this reagent under their tests, which enables us to dramatically respond to increasing our testing.

We are getting to a point where you can have a lot more drive-through testing at Kroger and Walmart and some of our drug stores. We are starting to get the testing much easier for people because you can drive through. You don't have to get out of your car, and you feel safer.

The saliva test, as opposed to a test where they take a swab deep into your nasal cavities, is a lot less intrusive, and that is starting to be used more. We are beginning to have enough testing where we can more safely say: Look, we are going to reopen, but we are going to test people a lot. If we find a problem, we are going to do the contact tracing to figure out who that person has been with and quarantine those people. That is less hard than quarantining everybody else.

For all of us, really, testing is where there is a problem. We will get to a point where we can test people who are asymptomatic. Even if you don't have symptoms, you could be a carrier. I think dramatically increasing the testing is the key thing. This is a diagnostic test. There are also the immunity tests coming up, which is also helpful, but nothing replaces the diagnostic test which says whether you have it or don't.

We also have seen good news in Ohio and around the country on these antiviral medications. That is the reason we can reopen safely, too. If someone does get coronavirus, they have a chance to take something like Tamiflu, which you take for the common flu. Remdesivir is the most recent one the FDA has approved, which has a record of being very helpful. People want to know, if they get the virus, that they can take something for it. That is helpful.

Finally, we are getting our hands around the PPE issue, the personal protective equipment, the masks and gloves and the gowns. This evening, after this talk, I am going to be working with an Ohio company that is interested in dramatically expanding the gown production. That would be great. We are working with the White House and others to try to ensure that can happen.

We have a lot of great world-class businesses in Ohio. What I am talking about tonight is an example of that. There are others, too, in healthcare

systems that have contributed to this coronavirus crisis all over the country. I have been working the last 6 weeks with them, making sure they have the opportunity to do that.

One of those key contributions from Ohio has been from a company called Battelle. Battelle is a global research institution and happens to be headquartered in Columbus, OH. They do awesome work all over the world. They run some of our national labs for the Energy Department. We worked with the Trump administration and with Ohio Governor Mike DeWine to help them get approval for a really innovative technology where they can take an N95 mask—one like this, except even better because it is N95—and they can recycle that mask. They decontaminate it.

These masks can be recycled up to 20 times. Think about that, 20 times. It is groundbreaking because they have enough machines to spread out around the country. They have 60 machines that they can recycle and decontaminate between 4 and 5 million masks a day. I worked with FEMA, HHS, and the White House to help Battelle secure a contract with the Federal Government to be able to take their technology and machines and spread them initially to hot spots around the country like New York, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, and now other places.

I would tell people who might be listening that, if you are connected with a healthcare entity, a hospital, a nursing home, EMS, if you are a firefighter and you use these N95 masks, don't throw them away. When you are done with them, put them aside in a separate bin for recycling and get them picked up. We worked on a contract with the Federal Government to help with the pick-up and delivery, which is also available now. You can get them picked up and take them to Battelle. Hopefully, they have a cleaning station near you, and for free, you get a recycled mask back. The process takes about 8 hours. If you are close to one, you can get it overnight.

We are not at full capacity on these machines. We should be. It is a great idea. Why spend the money to get some overpriced mask from China—because they are all overpriced now—when you can actually recycle what you have? It is a lot less medical waste, too. If you are interested in that, go to Battelle.org and learn more about it, or go to our website Portman.senate.gov, to find out more about it. Find out if there is a machine near you. Even if there is not, we can send them, and we can help you connect with companies, including Cardinal Health in Ohio, providing some of the logistics to get the masks back and forth.

That is an example of some of the things we have been working on the past 6 weeks to help with this effort. I want to, again, as I have done before, commend the folks at Battelle for devoting their time and energy to this

project. As soon as this coronavirus came up, they said to the engineers: Forget what you are doing, go work on this. They have also done a lot of testing with Ohio State, putting their folks against that, and now, they are working on other interesting technology that could be very helpful in detecting coronavirus. It is an example.

We had another company, Cardinal Health, that I mentioned, that are helping in terms of the logistics. They did something else early on. They came to me and said: We have 2.3 million protective gowns in storage. We are not using them. They are the kind of gowns that can be used as isolation gowns. They are very effective. They are not qualified as surgical gowns, but they can be used as isolation gowns. They were willing to donate them to the National Stockpile. We worked with, again, FDA, HHS, and the White House to get through some of the red tape because it is tough to get things approved at times with the Federal Government. There are reasons for that. We want to be safe. We got approval for those gowns, and bingo, like that, they started to go out. They went to New York, they went to Detroit, they went to places where there are hot spots. They are in the National Stockpile. They donated 2.3 million gowns.

One company that has been very helpful to so many Americans is GoJo. It is a company that makes Purell. I see some up here on the desk. Purell is made in Ohio, outside of Akron. We are very proud of Purell. They have been going 24/7, producing all they can. It is tough to find it in the grocery store because, as soon as the shipment comes in, they take it and use it. It is particularly helpful now that they have Purell beginning to reopen.

Reopening means doing things differently. It means wearing a mask when you are in proximity with somebody else. It means using Purell and washing your hands more often. It means being sure you are following the rules to be able to stay safe. Purell will continue to be needed.

They had a problem because the Federal Government was assessing a 25-percent tariff on two critical items they had to have for the dispensers. At least one item had a patent in China. China had the patent on it. Things were coming in from China with a 25-percent tariff. We were able to go to a U.S. Trade Representative. I commend Bob Lighthizer, who is the Trade Rep, for working with us on this.

For this period of time, they took that 25 percent off. They were having a tough time getting the supply and because it was increasing the costs by 25 percent. We were able to do that. Now. They are able to produce more of this Purell and more dispensers and do it less expensively.

By the way, this leads me to a comment on China. We need to pull back some of what we make in China and make it here. It is a pretty simple concept. It is harder to implement because

our supply chains are global and they are complex. Who would have thought that, on a GoJo dispenser for Purell, there would be a Chinese patented product, but there is. Whether it is gowns,—most of which are made in China—or masks or other products like something essential that is in a hand sanitizer dispenser, we have to pull those products back.

I think the way to do it isn't to beat up on China, but rather to provide the incentive—the carrot—to American companies and other companies and say, Make it here, make it in America. I think we can do that as a group, Republicans and Democrats alike.

I think there is consensus now that we should do more to reshore, and in some cases, shore for the first time, products that have been moved overseas and particularly to China. We wouldn't have had to get that special permission on the 25-percent tariff if it was made here.

We also worked with the FDA to get approval for a company called Second Breath in Cleveland, OH. It is another great example. There are so many in Ohio, but this is a company that didn't make ventilators at all. It is a consortium of several manufacturing companies that work together. But again, early on in this crisis, they said: We need ventilators. We can do that. We are manufacturers. We are Ohioans. We are inventors.

They went out and made these ventilators on their own that were then tested at three different Ohio hospitals. The medical community loved them. They are relatively inexpensive, relatively simple, and very effective.

Again, the FDA had to go through its process. My job is not to say to the FDA, You need to approve this. My job was to ask them to please expedite this process so, if it can be approved, we can get this out to people who are literally dying and need the ventilators. To the FDA's credit, Dr. Jeffrey Shuren, in particular, worked with us and got that product approved.

They already made a bunch of them. They weren't going to send them out if they didn't get approval. They didn't care because they were willing to take a loss, with the opportunity to save people. Now, those ventilators have gone out to stockpiles and hospitals, including New York, when they needed them all over the country.

It is an example of the kinds of things over the last 6 weeks we have been able to do in Ohio. The result is companies in Ohio are now making swabs, making masks, making face shields, making hand sanitizer.

Proctor and Gamble converted some of their perfume-making factory to making hand sanitizer. It probably smells pretty good. I don't know if it actually has a particular odor to it. If it comes from a perfume factory, it might not just be effective, but smell pretty good, too. Thanks to Proctor and Gamble and all these companies that are willing to step up and do these

things they have never done before and respond to these crisis—that is what Americans do. We get knocked down; we figure it out. We get back on our feet.

Ultimately, I am optimistic. Think about what has happened in the last couple of weeks. There is substantially new testing. In my own State of Ohio, again, a 600-percent increase of tests from 2 weeks to 3 weeks from now. Increasingly, new antiviral medication has been approved. It is something people can rely on—more testing and antiviral medication is critical. There are more PPEs. Finally, we are figuring it out, like the recycling which we can do right here in America. We can recycle our own masks. There are the gowns we are trying to get produced more here in America right now. We are starting to catch up on things that, frankly, we were pretty far behind in.

On the testing, I will tell you that, for the first few weeks of this crisis, you couldn't get a test in most parts of Ohio unless you were so severely ill that you had to be hospitalized. That was wrong. We just weren't prepared as a country.

By the way, the last administration wouldn't have been any more prepared, nor would the previous administration, which I served, have been any more prepared. We were not expecting a pandemic like this. We should have been, of course. There were some warnings. The country now will be prepared.

One thing we are doing is we are adding to that stockpile with the PPE, with the ventilators, and obviously with the antiviral medications for this virus and the vaccine for this virus. My hope is that vaccine, which the administration calls their process warp speed—and I appreciate that they are working around the clock. There are some scientists who have devoted their lives to this now. That is all they are doing.

And God bless them, and there are a bunch of them. And, by the way, some of these vaccines will not work. People will have spent hundreds of millions of dollars—even billions of dollars—on stuff that is not going to work. But kind of like those ventilators were made even though they didn't know if they were going to get approval or not, we want to have that virus vaccine ready.

If it does work and it gets approval, we want to have lots of doses of it already made. So there is going to be some money spent, including by the Federal taxpayer, but that is OK to ensure that we end up with something that really can be effective.

On the testing, I will tell you that in my own hometown of Cincinnati, OH, those first few weeks we really couldn't get tested unless you were to be hospitalized. And we had an interesting issue there, again, showing how Washington sometimes can make things a little slower. The University of Cincinnati, which is our primary academic

medical center in southern Ohio, had ordered a testing machine back in February. They ordered it because they knew this was coming, and they wanted to get the best of the best. So it was a high-quality machine, with high accuracy, and it could do 1,000 tests a day. By the way, at the time, they were doing about 80 to 100 tests a day in their own little lab, but they needed this equipment, and they had a contract for it back in February.

Well, come March they kept hearing next week, next week, next week, and they called me and I got involved. I got to the company and got to the University of Cincinnati and said: What is the real problem here? And they said: Well, we are being told by the Federal Government that we can't deliver it to Cincinnati. It needs to go somewhere else. I said: Well, they contracted for this back in February, and we are desperate for testing. We may not be a hotspot right now, but we are going to be unless we get some testing.

So, again, we broke through the red-tape and broke through what was some miscommunication. It turned out, with the help of the White House, that we got the approval to get the diagnostic tests there that had already been contracted for. It is called a cobas 6800 machine. It can process more than 1,000 diagnostic tests per day, and it is working. It is every day giving more people the sense of security that they know whether they have this or not, and they know whether the person that works in the store has it or not, and they know that we have more access to testing.

Now, I am not saying we are getting there, but that would be key to getting us back to business but also reopening in a way that we don't have to stop if there is an outbreak because we will have the testing to be able to really throw at it and then the contact tracing and be able to ensure that we can stop the spread of the virus.

So those are some of the things that we have worked on. We have worked with FEMA to unlock additional resources for Ohio, and that has happened around the country.

USDA has now allowed the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to operate the Disaster Household Distribution Program. We appreciate them. We worked with them on that so that we can officially get meals to food banks and families in Ohio.

We worked with the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that veterans could get an extension on their filing of claims and appeals during this time period for veterans' compensation benefits and other benefits during a time when the VA offices have been closed.

We helped stop the Federal Bureau of Prisons from sending more prisoners to one of our hotspots. It is a really sad case, the Eltkon Federal prison in Ohio. We also helped them bring more healthcare to the Eltkon prison. Frankly, I am discouraged that they

aren't doing more testing there. I talk to them constantly, and they are providing more testing, but not enough—not enough. I think it is inexcusable.

I think, in a situation like a nursing home or a prison, we should be focused on getting the testing in there. These are what they call congregant living situations. In this case it is a low-security prison. So it is more like dormitory-type style living, and, unfortunately, if they were to test as much as they should, I believe they would find out, as we found out in other State prisons in Ohio, that more than half the prisoners there are carrying the virus, and you have got to separate those people out from those who don't have it and do much more treating and tracing. But we have made progress there, and we will continue to.

The phase 3.5 rescue package we passed a few weeks ago does have funding for the PPP program, which is for small businesses, to be able to keep their employees and keep their doors open. It also has funding for healthcare. But the piece that hasn't gotten much attention and may be the most important aspect of the bill of all is \$25 billion in the bill for more testing.

Again, I am a broken record here on testing, but that money is so important, and we are using it in Ohio right now. About \$43 million has come to Ohio recently, I am told, and that funding will be helpful not just to ensure that we have testing, but do we have enough testing so that we will get a sense of what is going on in terms of the healthcare crisis, and then, when there is a hotspot, address it again immediately and be able to stop the spread of the virus? It is so important to us reopening and getting people back to work, back to their churches and other places of worship, and back to school.

We need to get back to a normal life, and we can, and we will. We will figure this out, but we do need the help of having the necessary testing capacity, diagnostic testing, and then it is also helpful to have the antibody test so you know whether you have developed an immunity or not. But those are both needed. You can't do it just with the antibody test. You have to also know through the diagnostic test whether someone has the disease or not to be able to pull that person out of a situation where he or she is with others and to find out whom they have been in touch with and do the contact tracing, and, again, quarantining those people, not quarantining everybody else. That is the effective way to do it.

Congress has now passed four of these legislative measures in an overwhelming, bipartisan fashion. It is a lot of money. About \$3 trillion have gone out the door from Federal taxpayers. I hope we can continue to be bipartisan. I hope we can work together to figure out how to move forward.

In my view, moving forward means looking at what we have done care-

fully. Let's not start to legislate again and spend more money until we know how what we have already sent works. The money is just being distributed now. In fact, most of our money in Ohio that goes to the State and local governments has not been distributed yet. Let's get that money out.

By the way, they need it. They need it badly. They need it to pay police and fire and EMS. Our cities in Ohio are really hurting because they depend so much on income taxes, on earnings taxes. Other cities in America don't because they can't, but about four of the top five cities in America that were most affected by the reduction in revenue from the coronavirus are in Ohio—Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Toledo.

So they have a real problem on their hands. I strongly urge the Department of Treasury to loosen up their requirements to allow that State and local funding to be used more flexibly, specifically for payroll, for public safety.

Based on Monday's guidance that we just got a couple of days ago here, they can now do that. That is just guidance. It is not legislation. I would love in whatever we do going forward to get that in legislation, to say: Let's provide flexibility to the States but also to these municipalities.

I will tell you that in my home State of Ohio, again, at the municipal level, we are really hurting. Budgets are being slashed because the revenue is not coming in because it is based on the economy. Most cities rely heavily on property tax. We don't. Property tax has not been affected in the way that income tax has or sales tax.

So we do need to pay attention to this, and people say: Well, we shouldn't send in more money to municipalities. Let's start with flexibility. Let them use the money they have more effectively for what they actually need.

I don't want a situation where you have a 30-percent or 40-percent cut in police, which is what is happening in some of our municipalities, to affect the public safety of our communities at a time like this. Police officers need to be on the street doing their jobs. God bless them. They are out there. We need them.

As for EMS personnel, if your grandmother needs to be rushed to the hospital, you want the EMS to come. You don't want to have a 40-percent cut in their services. So we do have to deal with this issue and be sure to provide flexibility is the first step.

And let's codify that by statute and make sure it is clear, not just guidance that doesn't seem to be consistent with the underlying law, because the underlying law says it has to be directly related to the COVID-19, and some of this is not. You need police officers on the street whether you had COVID-19 or not. So let's be sure we codify that and then let's see what is needed.

But I also think that in this next legislation we also have to be sure that we are not just looking at what has already passed but looking ahead. And

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

Salemhaven Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. A few days later, between 25 to 30 members of the cheerleading team gathered in the Salem High School parking lot, pom-poms in hand, to greet their fellow teammates from the safety of their cars and prepare for the procession to the nursing home.

The parade, which was carefully planned to ensure that all of the athletes were at least 6 feet away from one another and the residents, consisted of a line of cars where cheerleaders, one to a car, waved their pom-poms and blasted music to the delight of the residents.

I commend the members of the Salem High School cheerleading team for recognizing the importance of ensuring that those who are the most vulnerable to the virus feel supported and seen during this public health emergency. This is a difficult time for all Americans, which is why this straightforward act of kindness and recognition of community resonates with Granite Staters and all Americans and reflects the very best of our State.●

TRIBUTE TO DARREL ANDERSON

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I rise today to honor an outstanding business leader from the great State of Idaho—Idaho Power CEO Darrel Anderson.

There are many ways to define an effective leader: by their vision, their passion, or their courage to do something bold. Mr. Anderson possesses all the necessary qualifications and more. His impeccable character, his authenticity, and his humility define his success not only as CEO but also as an upstanding Idaho citizen, family man and friend.

Mr. Anderson's tenure as president and CEO has been one for the records. He led Idaho Power's parent company, IDACORP, to a historic 12 consecutive years of earnings growth—an unprecedented achievement among investor-owned utilities in the United States. In 2019, the company saw the best employee safety results ever recorded in its history, something Mr. Anderson cares deeply about. Under his leadership, Idaho Power also experienced the highest customer satisfaction scores ever achieved.

Business results like these deserve recognition. But if you ask any one of Idaho Power's nearly 2,000 employees, they will tell you Mr. Anderson's legacy will not be the company's impressive numbers; it will be that he knew their name, showed up for them in good times and bad and encouraged them to make a commitment to one another every single day. Mr. Anderson made employees feel valued and respected. He acknowledged individual contributions and inspired employees to do the same.

On June 1, after nearly 24 years with the company and serving at its helm since 2014, Darrel Anderson is retiring. I send my sincerest congratulations to

my friend and wish him all the best on his well-deserved retirement. Idaho Power's reliable, affordable and clean energy helps make our great State the ideal place to live, and I am grateful for his exceptional leadership of this outstanding company.●

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF MISSION AVIATION FELLOWSHIP

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, for myself and Mr. CRAPO, I want to recognize a very special nonprofit organization in our State that is celebrating its 75th anniversary on May 20. Mission Aviation Fellowship, or MAF, headquartered in Nampa, ID, was formed on May 20, 1945, by veteran pilots who returned from World War II with a vision that airplanes could be used for peaceful means, bringing medicine, education, and the gospel to isolated people around the world.

One of their founding members, Betty Greene, served as their first pilot, becoming the first woman to fly over the Andes in South America and the first female pilot in Sudan as she traveled the world on behalf of MAF. Betty also received a Congressional Gold Medal for her wartime service as a women Airforce service pilot, WASP. She piloted MAF's very first flight from La Habra, CA, to Tuxpan, Mexico, and little did she know at the time that Mission Aviation Fellowship would eventually partner with over 500 organizations in 13 countries, delivering medical services and vaccines, assisting with disaster response, and offering physical help and spiritual hope for those living in the farthest reaches of the world.

Their work among the most isolated people on our planet often goes unnoticed, but in 1956, the world was captivated by the story of MAF pilot Nate Saint and four other missionaries who were martyred on the banks of the Curaray River in Ecuador at the hands of Waorani warriors. Undeterred, MAF continued to expand its operations around the world, and in 2006, they moved their headquarters to Nampa, ID, to provide their pilots with quality backcountry flight training, favorable weather, and lower cost of operations.

The Nampa headquarters hosts MAF's maintenance and training facility, along with all of the back-office functions for its programs around the world. The nearly 200 local employees and 300 volunteers support another 400 staff members in foreign countries. MAF has a fleet of 47 airplanes that includes 13 Kodiaks that are made in Sandpoint, ID, and are especially well-suited for the short, rugged mountain top and jungle landing strips in the areas they serve.

Throughout their 75-year history, MAF has brought physical help and spiritual hope to those living at the ends of the Earth—even in the midst of wars, disease, and natural disasters. They look to serve those that are forgotten by the rest of the world, and I

congratulate them on their 75 years of service and thank them for being there to provide hope and deliver needed resources in some of the world's most challenging places to reach.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT OF THE VETO OF S.J. RES. 68, A JOINT RESOLUTION TO DIRECT THE REMOVAL OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES FROM HOSTILITIES AGAINST THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN THAT HAVE NOT BEEN AUTHORIZED BY CONGRESS—PM 54

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, spread in full upon the Journal, and held at the desk:

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S.J. Res. 68, a joint resolution that purports to direct the President to terminate the use of United States Armed Forces in hostilities against Iran. This indefinite prohibition is unnecessary and dangerous. It would weaken the President's authority in violation of Article II of the Constitution, and endanger the lives of American citizens and brave service members.

This joint resolution is unnecessary because it rests upon a faulty premise. Due to my decisive actions and effective policies, the United States is not engaged in the use of force against Iran. As Commander in Chief, I will always defend our Nation against threats to our security.

In response to an escalating series of attacks by Iran and Iranian-backed militias on United States forces and interests in the Middle East, on January 2, 2020, United States Armed Forces eliminated Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force as he was traveling in Iraq. The purposes of this strike were to protect United States personnel, deter Iran from conducting or supporting further attacks against

United States forces and interests, degrade the ability of Iran and Qods Force-backed militias to conduct attacks, and end Iran's strategic escalation of attacks against and threats to United States interests.

On January 7, 2020, Iran launched 16 ballistic missiles against United States and coalition forces in Iraq. These attacks resulted in no fatalities. The next day, in an address to the Nation, I noted that "Iran appears to be standing down" and emphasized that "the United States is ready to embrace peace with all who seek it."

One day later, this resolution was introduced. Its apparent aim was to prevent an escalation in hostilities between the United States and Iran. Yet no such escalation has occurred over the past 4 months, contrary to the often dire and confident predictions of many.

S.J. Res. 68 is also unnecessary because it incorrectly implies that the military airstrike against Qassem Soleimani in Iraq was conducted without statutory authority. The resolution states that "the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (Public Law 107-40; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) against the perpetrators of the 9/11 attack and the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107-243; 50 U.S.C. 1541 notes) do not serve as a specific statutory authorization for use of force against Iran." The strike against Soleimani, however, was fully authorized under both the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 ("2002 AUMF") and the President's constitutional authorities as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

The United States has long relied upon the 2002 AUMF to authorize the use of force for the purpose of establishing a stable, democratic Iraq and for addressing terrorist threats emanating from Iraq. Such uses of force need not address only threats from the Iraqi Government apparatus, but may also address threats to the United States posed by militias, terrorist groups, or other armed groups in Iraq. This has been a consistent application of the statute across Administrations, including the last Administration, which relied upon it to conduct operations in response to attacks and threats by Iran-backed militias in Iraq. Moreover, under Article II, the President is empowered to direct the use of military force to protect the Nation from an attack or threat of imminent attack and to protect important national interests.

In addition, S.J. Res. 68 is dangerous because it could hinder the President's ability to protect United States forces, allies, and partners, including Israel, from the continued threat posed by Iran and Iranian-backed militias. The resolution states that it should not "be construed to prevent the United States from defending itself from imminent attack." But this overlooks the Presi-

dent's need to respond to threats beyond imminent attacks on the United States and its forces.

Protecting the national security of the United States involves taking actions to de-escalate threats around the world, including threats posed by Iran and Iranian-backed militias. Iran and Iranian-backed militias have a long history of attacking United States and coalition forces. As demonstrated by the recent indirect fire attacks on January 26, 2020, on the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad and on March 11 and 14, 2020, on Camp Taji, Iraq, Iran and Iranian-backed militias continue to present a threat. This resolution would impede the President's ability to counter adversarial forces by anticipating their next moves and taking swift actions to address them decisively.

For all of these reasons, I cannot support this joint resolution. My Administration has taken strong actions, within statutory authority, to help keep our Nation safe, and I will not approve this resolution, which would undermine my ability to protect American citizens, service members, and interests. Therefore, it is my duty to return S.J. Res. 68 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.
THE WHITE HOUSE, May 6, 2020.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4405. A communication from the Secretary of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a violation of the Antideficiency Act; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-4406. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Disposition of Proceeds from Sales of Surplus Personal Property" (RIN0790-AK30) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4407. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General John N. T. Shanahan, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4408. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Gustave F. Perna, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4409. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Sustainment), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report on Realignment of the Defense Acquisition System to Implement Acquisition Reforms"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4410. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Victim and Witness Assistance"

(RIN0790-AJ31) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4411. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to authorizing the Secretary of Defense to order units and individual members of the Selected Reserve, to active duty, to augment the active forces for the effective conduct of enhanced Department of Defense Counternarcotic Operation in the Western Hemisphere, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 30, 2020; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4412. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Darsie D. Rogers, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4413. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Suspension of Community Eligibility, Internal Docket ID FEMA-8623" ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2020-0005)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4414. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Suspension of Community Eligibility, Internal Docket ID FEMA-8623" ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2020-0005)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4415. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Flood Elevation Determination" ((44 CFR Part 67) (Docket No. FEMA-2020-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4416. A communication from the Director, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Treatment of Pandemic Relief Payments Under Regulation E and Application of the Compulsory Use Prohibition" (12 CFR Part 1005) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4417. A communication from the Executive Director, Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of the Comptroller's 2019 Office of Minority and Women Inclusion Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4418. A communication from the Senior Legal Advisor for Regulatory Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Assessment of Fees on Certain Bank Holding Companies and Nonbank Financial Companies Supervised by the Federal Reserve Board To Cover the Expenses of the Financial Research Fund" ((RIN1505-AC59) (31 CFR Part 150)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4419. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Interim Final Rule - Regulatory Capital Rule:

Paycheck Protection Program Lending Facility and Paycheck Protection Program Loans” (RIN3064-AF49) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4420. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Interim Final Rule - Regulatory Capital Rule: Eligible Retained Income” (RIN3064-AF40) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4421. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Interim Final Rule - Regulatory Capital Rule: Money Market Mutual Fund Liquidity Facility” (RIN3064-AF41) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4422. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Interim Final Rule - Regulatory Capital Rule: Revised Transition of the Current Expected Credit Losses” (RIN3064-AF42) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4423. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Interim Final Rule - Regulatory Capital Rule: Paycheck Protection Program Lending Facility and Paycheck Protection Program Loans; Correction” (RIN3064-AF49) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4424. A communication from the Vice President of Environment, Tennessee Valley Authority, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969” (18 CFR Part 1318), received in the office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4425. A communication from the Deputy Counsel, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Inspector General, Environmental Protection Agency, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4426. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulatory Guide (RG) 8.39, Rev 1, ‘Release of Patients Administered Radioactive Material’” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4427. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.199, ‘Anchoring Components and Structural Supports in Concrete’ Revision 1” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4428. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.151, Revision 2, ‘Instru-

ment Sensing Lines’” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4429. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.188, Rev 2, ‘Standard Format and Content for Applications to Renew Nuclear Power Plant Operating Licenses’” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4430. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.180, Revision 2, ‘Guidelines for Evaluating Electromagnetic and Radio Frequency Interference in Safety-Related Instrumentation and Control Systems’” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4431. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulatory Guide (RG) 8.39, Rev 1, ‘Release of Patients Administered Radioactive Material’” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4432. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Issuance of a Revision to the Guidance Document for Alternative Disposal Requests” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4433. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Enforcement Guidance Memorandum 20-002 - Attachment 1, dispositioning violations of NRC requirements for completion periodicities associated with security training and requalification requirements during the COVID-19 public health emergency” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4434. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Enforcement Guidance Memorandum 20-002, Dispositioning violations of NRC requirements during Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4435. A communication from the Secretary of the Senate, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of the receipts and expenditures of the Senate for the period from October 1, 2019 through April 30, 2020, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2020; ordered to lie on the table.

EC-4436. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Extension of Time to File Application for Tentative Carryback Adjustment” (Notice 2020-26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4437. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the

Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Notice: Update to Notice 2020-18, Relief for Taxpayers Affected by Ongoing Coronavirus Disease 2019 Pandemic, Related to Gift and Generation-Skipping Transfer Tax Filing and Payment Deadlines” (Notice 2020-20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4438. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Notice: Relief for Taxpayers Affected by Ongoing Coronavirus Disease 2019 Pandemic” (Notice 2020-18) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4439. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Effective Date for Employment Tax Credits Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act” (Notice 2020-21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4440. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Revenue Procedure 2020-14” (RP-103465-20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4441. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Treasury Decision (TD): Rules Regarding Certain Hybrid Arrangements” ((RIN1545-B053) (TD 9896)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4442. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Covered Asset Acquisitions” ((RIN1545-BM36) (TD 9895)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4443. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Announcement and Report Concerning Advance Pricing Agreements” (ANN 2020-2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4444. A communication from the Deputy Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits” (29 CFR Part 4022) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4445. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances, Mine Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Electronic Detonators” (RIN1219-AB88) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4446. A communication from the Executive Secretary, National Labor Relations

Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Representation-Case Procedures: Election Bars; Proof of Majority Support in Construction-Industry Collective-Bargaining Relationships" (RIN3142-AA16) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4447. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medical Devices; Technical Amendment" (Docket No. FDA-2012-N-0011) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4448. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medical Devices; Technical Amendment" (Docket No. FDA-2020-N-0011) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4449. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Office of Regulatory Affairs Division Director; Technical Amendments" (Docket No. FDA-2019-N-0011) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4450. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Tobacco Products; Required Warnings for Cigarette Packages and Advertisements" (RIN0910-AI39) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4451. A communication from the Executive Director, Office of General Counsel, Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Cost-of-living Adjustments and Identity Verification" (5 CFR Part 1650) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 4, 2020; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. INHOFE for the Committee on Armed Services.

Air Force nominations beginning with Col. Michael W. Bank and ending with Col. Mark A. Vavra, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2020.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Gary M. Brito, to be Lieutenant General.

Navy nominations beginning with Rear Adm. (1h) Carl P. Chebi and ending with Rear Adm. (1h) Douglas W. Small, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 2, 2020.

Navy nomination of Capt. Rick Freedman, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Navy nominations beginning with Capt. Susan Bryerjoyner and ending with Capt. John A. Watkins, which nominations were

received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 2, 2020.

Navy nominations beginning with Capt. Mark A. Melson and ending with Capt. Michael S. Sciretta, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 2, 2020. (minus 15 nominees beginning with Capt. Bradley J. Andros)

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Eugene H. Black III, to be Vice Admiral.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Army nominations beginning with William P. Abbott and ending with D015041, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 4, 2020.

Army nominations beginning with Davis M. Abt and ending with D014989, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 4, 2020.

Army nominations beginning with Jamie E. Abel and ending with D014063, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 4, 2020.

Army nominations beginning with Adesola O. Adepegba and ending with G010437, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 4, 2020.

Army nomination of Jamal D. Snell, to be Major.

Army nomination of Kelly L. French, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of William A. Forbes, to be Colonel.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Jeffrey T. Jones II and ending with Juan F. Rodriguez, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 6, 2020.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Matthew S. Breen and ending with Reyes J. Rivas, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 4, 2020.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Brett D. Abbamonte and ending with Jason C. Yurisc, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 4, 2020. (minus 2 nominees: Patrick R. Moran; Anthony N. Sama)

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Joshua D. Anderson and ending with Scott W. Zimmerman, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 2, 2020. (minus 1 nominee: Samuel K. Lee)

Navy nomination of Daniel M. Wiegrefe, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of Katherine L. Jaudon, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Paul D. Sargent, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of Christopher C. Supko, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of James G. Buckley, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Michael G. Matson, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Kevan M. Mellendick, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Andrew S. Morris, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Andrew D. Cordrey, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Nicholas R. Leinweber, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Sean A. McKay, to be Captain.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 3615. A bill to amend the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 to extend the rural community hospital demonstration program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, and Mrs. LOEFFLER):

S. 3616. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the inclusion of certain emblems on headstones and markers furnished for veterans by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. ERNST:

S. 3617. A bill to require payment of hazardous duty pay for members of the Armed Forces performing duty in response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 3618. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt distilled spirits plants from denaturing requirements with respect to hand sanitizer produced to help combat COVID-19; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. REED:

S. 3619. A bill to amend title II of division A of the CARES Act to modify certain provisions related to unemployment compensation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. JONES, Ms. SMITH, Ms. WARREN, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. UDALL, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 3620. A bill to establish a Housing Assistance Fund at the Department of the Treasury; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Mr. BRAUN):

S. 3621. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to remove limitations on the required use of American iron and steel products in projects carried out using State revolving loan funds, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 3622. A bill to waive the cost share requirement for Indian Tribes receiving disaster assistance relating to COVID-19, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. JONES, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN,

Mr. UDALL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. WARREN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. PETERS, and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 3623. A bill to provide for an enhanced Coronavirus relief fund for units of government with a population of 500,000 or less, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. REED, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. KING, Ms. SMITH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. UDALL, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. BROWN, Ms. HIRONO, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 3624. A bill to amend the national service laws to prioritize national service programs and projects that are directly related to the response to and recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 3625. A bill to amend subpart 1 of part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to ensure that mental health screenings and assessments are provided to children and youth upon entry into foster care; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. ROMNEY):

S. 3626. A bill to establish a review of United States multilateral aid; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CASEY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PETERS, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. REED, Mr. BROWN, Mr. UDALL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. KING, Mr. TESTER, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WARNER, Mr. JONES, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 3627. A bill to provide for the expedited and transparent procurement and distribution of equipment and supplies needed to combat COVID-19; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. ERNST:

S. 3628. A bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds for purchasing dogs and cats from wet markets in China, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 3629. A bill to establish the Office to Enforce and Protect Against Child Sexual Exploitation; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SASSE:

S. 3630. A bill to provide certain limitations on liability for actions taken by health care providers to combat COVID-19; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SASSE:

S. 3631. A bill to provide relief for rural providers during the national emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19); to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. JONES, Mr. MANCHIN,

Mr. BROWN, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 3632. A bill to provide funding for cities, counties, and other units of general local government to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mr. CARPER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. SMITH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. WARREN, Mr. SCHATZ, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 3633. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to continue to update and make publicly available EJSreen or an equivalent tool, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. JONES, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. SMITH, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. HARRIS, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 3634. A bill to address health workforce shortages and disparities highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic through additional funding for the National Health Service Corps and Nurse Corps; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 3635. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to maintain a list of the country of origin of all drugs marketed in the United States, to ban the use of Federal funds for the purchase of, or reimbursement for, drugs manufactured in China, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 3636. A bill to transfer the United States Secret Service to the Department of the Treasury; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mrs. LOEFFLER):

S. 3637. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to extend lease protections for servicemembers under stop movement orders in response to a local, national, or global emergency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. KING):

S. 3638. A bill to allow Coronavirus Relief Fund payments to be used to replace revenue shortfalls resulting from COVID-19; to the Committee on Appropriations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. Res. 560. A resolution recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr.

BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COTTON, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. BURR, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. HOEVEN, Ms. HARRIS, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. MCSALLY, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. DAINES, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. Res. 561. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Nurses Week, to be observed from May 6 through May 12, 2020; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. LOEFFLER (for herself, Mr. CASEY, and Ms. HASSAN):

S. Res. 562. A resolution designating March 25, 2020, as "National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. KAINE, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KING, Mr. JONES, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. REED, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. ROSEN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. LOEFFLER, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. ERNST):

S. Res. 563. A resolution designating March 2020, as "National Women's History Month"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. Con. Res. 38. A concurrent resolution to establish the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies for the inauguration of the President-elect and Vice President-elect of the United States on January 20, 2021; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 119

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 119, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit taking minors across State lines in circumvention of laws requiring the involvement of parents in abortion decisions.

S. 249

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 249, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to regain observer status for Taiwan in the World Health Organization, and for other purposes.

S. 1781

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1781, a bill to authorize appropriations for the Department of State for fiscal years 2020 through 2022 to provide assistance to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras through bilateral compacts to increase protection of women and children in their homes and communities and reduce female homicides, domestic violence, and sexual assault.

S. 2085

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, his name was added as a cosponsor of

S. 2085, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to eligible entities to carry out educational programs about the Holocaust, and for other purposes.

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2085, *supra*.

S. 2539

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2539, a bill to modify and reauthorize the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, and for other purposes.

S. 2599

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mrs. LOEFFLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2599, a bill to amend the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 to provide assistance to manage farmer and rancher stress and for the mental health of individuals in rural areas, and for other purposes.

S. 2815

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2815, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the National Purple Heart Honor Mission.

S. 3485

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 3485, a bill to expand the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to expand revenue sharing for offshore wind, to reauthorize the National Oceans and Coastal Security Act, and for other purposes.

S. 3565

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 3565, a bill to amend the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act to provide additional protections for consumers and small business owners from debt collection during a major disaster or emergency.

S. 3612

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) were added as cosponsors of S. 3612, a bill to clarify for purposes of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that receipt of coronavirus assistance does not affect the tax treatment of ordinary business expenses.

S. RES. 303

At the request of Mr. HAWLEY, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr.

CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 303, a resolution calling upon the leadership of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to dismantle its kwan-li-so political prison labor camp system, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 511

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 511, a resolution supporting the role of the United States in helping save the lives of children and protecting the health of people in developing countries with vaccines and immunization through GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION

By Mr. REED:

S. 3619. A bill to amend title II of division A of the CARES Act to modify certain provisions related to unemployment compensation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today, I am introducing the Strengthening UI for Coronavirus Impacted Workers and Students Act. For the 30 million American unemployed workers, the enhanced jobless benefits created in the CARES Act are a lifeline. However, the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation, which provides a \$600-per-week benefit on top of an individual's regular unemployment insurance (UI) benefits are set to expire on July 31, 2020. Arbitrarily cutting these benefits off in the midst of an ongoing pandemic could make a desperate situation worse for individuals and harm the economy. Moreover, if these workers are prematurely pushed back into unsafe work environments, it will ultimately harm families, businesses, and communities.

That is why my new legislation seeks to expand and enhance the unemployment insurance of the CARES Act. Specifically, this bill would continue to offer out-of-work Americans the \$600-per-week additional benefit through the end of the year and make it retroactive to the date of the coronavirus pandemic disaster declaration date. This legislation would also exempt these pandemic-specific benefits from being factored into eligibility for means-tested programs, such as Section 8 housing, SNAP, TANF, and WIC. Furthermore, it would create a \$300 Federal benefit for recent college graduates, students, and others who are willing and able to work absent COVID-19 but who do not have recent work history. Finally, this legislation would codify guidance by the Department of Labor requiring employees who are participating in "work sharing" programs to be able to receive the \$600-per-work boost. I added provisions to the CARES Act to Federally finance these cost-effective and job saving "work sharing" programs, which give struggling companies the flexibility to

reduce hours instead of laying off their workforce, while allowing the employees to collect unemployment insurance on the days they are not working.

The bill is supported by numerous organizations including the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), National Education Association (NEA), National Employment Law Project (NELP), National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), The Arc, United Auto Workers (UAW), National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, National Disability Rights Network, and National Women's Law Center.

We have to be smart and this targeted, temporary measure will help ensure Americans who are out of work through no fault of their own can afford food, housing, and medicine until it is safe to go back to work. I am pleased to join my colleague in the other body, Representative KILDEE, in sponsoring this legislation, and I look forward to working with my colleagues here and across the Capitol to secure passage of this important legislation.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. JONES, Ms. SMITH, Ms. WARREN, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. UDALL, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 3620. A bill to establish a Housing Assistance Fund at the Department of the Treasury; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, along with Senators BROWN, TESTER, SCHATZ, JONES, SMITH, WARREN, SINEMA, WARNER, MENENDEZ, VAN HOLLEN, CORTEZ MASTO, KAINE, UDALL, BOOKER, FEINSTEIN, DURBIN, MERKLEY, and WYDEN, I am introducing legislation that would create a \$75 billion Housing Assistance Fund that builds on the success of the Hardest Hit Fund at the Treasury Department that I championed in 2010.

The Hardest Hit Fund provided funds to 18 State-level Housing Finance Agencies, directing targeted foreclosure prevention assistance to households and neighborhoods in States like Rhode Island hit hard by the economic and housing market downturn.

The Housing Assistance Fund expands this model to provide a flexible source Federal aid to all State-level Housing Finance Agencies. This Federal funding could then be used to help struggling households remain in their homes while they search for new employment or wait to get back to work. Financial assistance could go towards preventing eviction, mortgage delinquency, default, foreclosures, or loss of utility services, such as water, gas, and

electricity. Funds could also be used to keep the Internet connected and remain current with property taxes.

In the midst of responding to the coronavirus, we clearly need to do everything we can to help our constituents. According to CNBC, 8.7 million jobs were lost in the Great Recession, and as of April 23, 2020, more than 26 million Americans filed unemployment insurance claims in just five weeks. Just for comparative purposes, CNBC also reported that 22.4 million jobs were created since the Great Recession.

This means we're facing job losses at an unprecedented scale and pace.

What this also means is that we could be facing a potential wave of evictions and foreclosures, so there is no time to waste. We should respond accordingly so that more families can make it to the other side of this public health emergency while staying safe in their homes. This is precisely the goal of this Housing Assistance Fund legislation we are introducing today.

I thank the National Council of State Housing Agencies; Habitat for Humanity; National Housing Conference; National Community Reinvestment Coalition; National Association of Affordable Housing Lenders; National Leased Housing Association; Americans for Financial Reform; National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of its low-income clients; Center for Responsible Lending; Rhode Island Housing; and the Rhode Island Association of Realtors for their support.

I urge all of my colleagues to join in pressing for inclusion of the Housing Assistance Fund in our continued response to the coronavirus pandemic.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. JONES, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. SMITH, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. HARRIS, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 3634. A bill to address health workforce shortages and disparities highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic through additional funding for the National Health Service Corps and Nurse Corps; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 3634

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Health Heroes 2020 Act".

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS.

(a) ADDITIONAL FUNDING.—Section 10503(b) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 254b-2(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(F), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in paragraph (2)(H), by striking the period and inserting "; and"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(3) to be transferred to the Secretary of Health and Human Services—

"(A) \$25,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2020, to provide additional funding to carry out subsection (i) of section 338A of the Public Health Service Act and the National Health Service Corps Loan Program under section 338B of such Act, of which—

"(i) \$15,000,000,000 shall be allocated to the program under section 338A; and

"(ii) \$10,000,000,000 shall be allocated to the program under such section 338B; and

"(B) \$690,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2026, to provide additional amounts to carry out the National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program under section 338A of the Public Health Service Act, the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program under section 338B of such Act, and the reserve service program under section 338O of such Act."

(b) CRITERIA FOR USE OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR IN-DEMAND PROFESSIONALS.—Section 338A of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 2541) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(i) Not less than 40 percent of the amounts made available to carry out this section under 10503(b)(3)(A)(i) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act shall be allocated to scholarships under this section for eligible applicants who are members of groups that are historically underrepresented in health care professions, including racial and ethnic minorities and individuals from low-income urban and rural communities. To carry out the requirements of this subsection, the Secretary may coordinate with entities receiving funding under section 739 to identify, recruit, and select individuals to receive such scholarships."

(c) NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS RESERVE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subpart III of part D of title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 2541 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 3380. NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS RESERVE SERVICE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—From the amounts made available under section 10503(b)(3)(B) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2024, the Secretary shall, to the extent permitted by, and consistent with, the requirements of applicable State law, use such sums as the Secretary determines necessary to establish, as a demonstration project, a National Health Service Corps Reserve Service (referred to in this section as the 'reserve service') under which a qualified individual agrees to engage in service for a period specified in a contract under this section in such reserve service under this section.

"(b) RESERVE SERVICE REQUIREMENTS.—An individual whose obligated service under a contract under section 338A is provided, pursuant to a contract under subsection (a), as reserve service, and any other participating individual described in subparagraph (B) of subsection (c)(2) may practice a health profession in any private capacity, subject to the following requirements:

"(1) In the event of a public health emergency declared under section 319, a major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, or an emergency declared by the President under section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act or a national emergency declared by the President under the National Emergencies Act, for the duration of such emergency or dis-

aster, such individual shall be subject to serve in such capacity as the Secretary shall determine appropriate to carry out the purposes of this section, and in accordance with the Secretary's plan to increase surge capacity in response to public health emergencies or disasters. Such service may be furnished in coordination with the Corps described in section 204, a State, territorial, or local public health department, or through the process described in section 319(e).

"(2) Not less frequently than 2 days each month, and for a total of not fewer than 30 days each year, as directed by the Secretary, such individual shall—

"(A) conduct trainings on public health preparedness and response activities, which may be in coordination with the State, territorial, or local health department; or

"(B) furnish health care services to low-income individuals in a health professional shortage area (as defined under section 332(a)), a medically underserved population (as defined under section 330(b)(3)), or a medically underserved area or area at high risk of a public health emergency as designated by the Secretary.

"(c) QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS.—An individual may be eligible to participate in the reserve service under this section if such individual meets one of the following criteria:

"(1) An individual participating in the Scholarship Program under section 338A may satisfy the obligated service requirement under such program if the individual's contract provides for such service.

"(2) An individual who participated in the Loan Repayment Program under section 338B and who satisfied the obligated service requirements under such program, in accordance with the individual's contract.

"(3) An individual who—

"(A) did not participate in the Scholarship Program under section 338A or the Loan Repayment Program under section 338B;

"(B) has a graduate degree in medicine, osteopathic medicine, dentistry, or another health profession, or an appropriate graduate degree from a program of behavioral or mental health, or is certified as a nurse midwife, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant;

"(C) holds a license issued by a State, the District of Columbia, or a territory to practice the applicable profession;

"(D) is otherwise qualified to practice, and has experience practicing, in a profession—

"(i) described in section 338B(a)(1); or

"(ii) another high-demand health care field or specialty that the Secretary identifies, through a process conducted every 3 years, as a field or specialty of national priority, based on relative workforce shortages, expected workforce changes, or projected changes in patient needs; and

"(E) satisfies any other eligibility or application requirements specified by the Secretary in order to demonstrate the individual's qualifications.

"(d) RESERVE SERVICE PLAN.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall establish, in coordination with the Surgeon General and State, tribal, and local health departments, an action plan for the service commitments, priority areas, coordination efforts, training requirements, and such other considerations as the Secretary determines appropriate, to ensure the complementary, additive capacity of such individuals providing reserve service.

"(e) CONTRACTS FOR CERTAIN PARTICIPATING INDIVIDUALS.—An individual described in subparagraph (B) of subsection (c)(2) who is participating in the reserve service program under this section shall receive loan repayments in an amount equal to 50 percent of the amount of payments that would be required with respect to a participant of the

same clinical profession in the Loan Repayment Program pursuant to a contract entered into at the same time under section 338B(g), in a manner similar to the manner in which payments are made under such section, pursuant to the terms of a contract between the Secretary and such individual. The Secretary shall establish a system of contracting for purposes of this subsection which shall be similar to the contract requirements and terms under subsections (c), (d), and (f) of section 338E.

“(f) REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report that evaluates the demonstration project established under this section, including—

“(1) the effects of such program on health care access, public health emergency response capacity, and the provider workforce pipeline; and

“(2) any other considerations as the Secretary determines appropriate.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.—Section 338A of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254i) is amended—

(i) in subsection (b)(2), by inserting “, or be eligible for, or hold, an appointment in the reserve service under section 338O” before the semicolon;

(ii) in subsection (c)(2)(B), by inserting “or through reserve service under an agreement under section 338O” after “section 338D”; and

(iii) in the flush text of subsection (f)(1)(B)(v), by inserting “, including service under the reserve service in accordance with section 338O, as applicable” before the semicolon at the end.

(B) OBLIGATED SERVICE.—Section 338C of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254m) is amended—

(i) in subsection (a), by inserting “or 338O” after “section 338D”; and

(ii) in subsection (c)—

(I) in paragraph (1), by striking “, or” and inserting a semicolon;

(II) in paragraph (2), by striking “agreement,” and inserting “agreement; or”; and

(III) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) in the case of an individual who enters into an agreement with the Secretary under section 338O, on the date specified in such agreement.”.

SEC. 3. FUNDING FOR THE NURSE CORPS SCHOLARSHIP AND LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM.

(a) FUNDING.—There are hereby appropriated, out of amounts in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$5,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2020, for purposes of carrying out section 846 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 297n), to remain available until expended, except that—

(1) of the amount appropriated under this heading and made available for scholarships, not less than 40 percent shall be allocated to scholarships for eligible applicants who are members of groups that are historically underrepresented in health care professions, including racial and ethnic minorities and individuals from low-income urban and rural communities; and

(2) to carry out the requirements of paragraph (1), the Secretary may coordinate with entities receiving funding under section 821 to identify, recruit, and select individuals to receive such scholarships.

(b) EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amounts provided by this section are designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

(2) DESIGNATION IN SENATE.—In the Senate, this section is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4112(a) of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018.

SEC. 4. FLEXIBILITY FOR MEMBERS OF NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS DURING EMERGENCY PERIODS.

Section 333 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254f) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) During any public health emergency declared by the Secretary under section 319, the Secretary may, notwithstanding any other provision of this section, assign Corps members, with the voluntary agreement of such Corps members, to provide such health services at such places, and for such number of hours, as the Secretary determines necessary to respond to such emergency, provided that the total number of hours required are the same as were required of such members prior to the change of assignment.”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 560—RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH

Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 560

Whereas the Senate is committed to the awareness, prevention, and deterrence of sexual violence affecting individuals in the United States;

Whereas, according to the National Crime Victimization Survey, between 2008 and 2018, approximately—

(1) 3,434,326 women were victims of rape and sexual assault; and

(2) 523,895 men were victims of rape and sexual assault;

Whereas, due to the unprecedented challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, including mandatory stay-at-home orders, the needs of sexual assault victims have become even more complex and challenging;

Whereas, according to a March 2020 survey by the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence of more than 600 rape crisis programs, 89 percent of those programs need emergency stimulus funding to respond to requests from survivors for support and emergency assistance;

Whereas, according to the March 2020 survey, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, 40 percent of the programs surveyed have experienced an increased demand for services both in terms of new requests and more dire and complicated requests from existing clients, including requests relating to technology needs for virtual services and emergency needs of vulnerable survivors;

Whereas, during the pandemic, many rape crisis centers have had to cancel signature fundraisers and have experienced overall decreases in private donations;

Whereas, according to the 2018 Child Maltreatment Report of the Department of Health and Human Services, in 2018, child protective services agencies substantiated or found strong evidence to indicate that 47,124 children under 18 years of age were victims of sexual abuse;

Whereas, according to the National Crime Victimization Survey, between 2014 and 2018, an average of only 29 percent of rapes or sexual assaults in the United States were reported to law enforcement agencies;

Whereas studies have suggested that the rate at which American Indians and Alaska Natives experience sexual violence is significantly higher than for other populations in the United States;

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than ½ of all female rape victims reported being raped by an intimate partner;

Whereas sexual violence is a burden for many individuals who serve in the Armed Forces, and the Department of Defense estimates that approximately 20,500 members of the Armed Forces, including approximately 13,000 women and 7,500 men, experienced some form of contact or penetrative sexual assault during 2018;

Whereas sexual assault does not discriminate on any basis and can affect any individual in the United States;

Whereas sexual violence may take many forms, including acquaintance, stranger, spousal, and gang rape, incest, child sexual abuse, elder sexual abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation of disabled persons, commercial sex trafficking, sexual harassment, and stalking;

Whereas, according to the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, in addition to immediate physical and emotional costs, sexual assault can have numerous adverse consequences for the victim, which may include post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, major depression, homelessness, eating disorders, and suicide;

Whereas, according to a 2019 survey of rape crisis centers by the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, ½ of such centers have a waiting list, in some cases months long, for counseling services, 44 percent lack a therapist on staff, and 84 percent have experienced an increased demand for services;

Whereas many sexual assaults are not reported to law enforcement agencies, and many States have restrictive criminal statutes of limitations, which enable many perpetrators to evade punishment for their crimes;

Whereas advances in deoxyribonucleic acid (commonly known as “DNA”) technology have enabled law enforcement agencies to identify and prosecute the perpetrators in tens of thousands of previously unsolved sexual assault cases;

Whereas incarceration of sexual assault perpetrators can prevent perpetrators from committing additional crimes;

Whereas national, State, territorial, and Tribal coalitions, community-based rape crisis centers, and other organizations across the United States are committed to—

(1) increasing public awareness of sexual violence and the prevalence of sexual violence; and

(2) eliminating sexual violence through prevention and education;

Whereas important partnerships have been formed among criminal and juvenile justice agencies, health professionals, public health workers, educators, first responders, and victim service providers;

Whereas thousands of volunteers and staff at rape crisis centers, State coalitions against sexual assault, and nonprofit organizations across the United States play an important role in making crisis hotlines and other services available to survivors of sexual assault;

Whereas free, confidential help is available to all victims and survivors of sexual assault through—

(1) the National Sexual Assault Hotline—
(A) by telephone at 800-656-HOPE; and

(B) online at <https://hotline.rainn.org>; and
 (2) more than 1,000 sexual assault service providers across the United States;

Whereas the victim service programs of the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (commonly known as “RAINN”), including the National Sexual Assault Hotline—

(1) in 2019, helped 304,275 survivors of sexual assault and their loved ones, which represented the greatest number of people assisted since the founding of the hotline in 1994; and

(2) continue to receive a record number of requests for support in 2020;

Whereas the Department of Defense provides the Safe Helpline hotline, Safe HelpRoom online chat service, and Safe Helpline mobile application, each of which offer support and help to members of the Department of Defense community—

(1) by telephone at 877-995-5247; and

(2) online at <https://safehelpline.org>;

Whereas individual and collective efforts reflect the dream of the people of the United States—

(1) for individuals and organizations to actively work to prevent all forms of sexual violence; and

(2) for no victim of sexual assault to be unserved or feel that there is no path to justice; and

Whereas April 2020 is recognized as “National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) it is the sense of the Senate that—

(A) National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month provides a special opportunity to—

(i) educate the people of the United States about sexual violence; and

(ii) encourage—

(I) the prevention of sexual assault;

(II) improvement in the treatment of survivors of sexual assault; and

(III) the prosecution of perpetrators of sexual assault;

(B) it is appropriate to properly acknowledge survivors of sexual assault and to commend the volunteers and professionals who assist those survivors in their efforts to heal;

(C) national and community organizations and private sector supporters should be recognized and applauded for their work in—

(i) promoting awareness about sexual assault;

(ii) providing information and treatment to survivors of sexual assault; and

(iii) increasing the number of successful prosecutions of perpetrators of sexual assault; and

(D) public safety, law enforcement, and health professionals should be recognized and applauded for their hard work and innovative strategies to ensure perpetrators of sexual assault are held accountable; and

(2) the Senate supports the goals and ideals of National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

SENATE RESOLUTION 561—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL NURSES WEEK, TO BE OBSERVED FROM MAY 6 THROUGH MAY 12, 2020

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COTTON, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. BURR, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. HOEVEN, Ms. HARRIS, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. MCSALLY, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. DAINES, and Mrs. SHAHEEN)

submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 561

Whereas, beginning in 1991, National Nurses Week is celebrated annually from May 6, also known as “National Recognition Day for Nurses”, through May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing;

Whereas, in 2020, National Nurses Week falls within the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife, as designated by the World Health Organization;

Whereas National Nurses Week is a time of year to reflect on the important contributions that nurses make to provide safe, high-quality health care;

Whereas nurses serve on the front lines, risking their lives treating the injured and sick during wartime, natural disasters, and pandemics, including the COVID-19 pandemic;

Whereas nurses are known to be patient advocates, acting to protect the lives of individuals under their care;

Whereas nurses represent the largest single component of the health care professions, with an estimated population of more than 4,000,000 registered nurses in the United States;

Whereas nurses are leading in the delivery of quality care in a transformed health care system that improves patient outcomes and safety;

Whereas the Future of Nursing report of the Institute of Medicine has called for the nursing profession to meet the call for leadership in a team-based delivery model;

Whereas, when nurse staffing levels increase, the risk of patient complications and lengthy hospital stays decreases, resulting in cost savings;

Whereas nurses are experienced researchers, and the work of nurses encompasses a wide scope of scientific inquiry, including clinical research, health systems and outcomes research, and nursing education research;

Whereas nurses provide care that is sensitive to the cultures and customs of individuals across the United States;

Whereas nurses are well-positioned to provide leadership to eliminate health care disparities that exist in the United States;

Whereas nurses are the cornerstone of the public health infrastructure, promoting healthy lifestyles and educating communities on disease prevention and health promotion;

Whereas nurses help inform and educate, and work closely with, legislators to improve—

(1) the education, retention, recruitment, and practice of all nurses; and

(2) the health and safety of the patients for whom the nurses care;

Whereas there is a need—

(1) to strengthen nursing workforce development programs at all levels, including the number of doctorally prepared faculty members; and

(2) to provide education to the nurse research scientists who can develop new nursing care models to improve the health status of the diverse population of the United States;

Whereas nurses touch the lives of the people of the United States through every stage of life; and

Whereas nursing has been voted the most honest and ethical profession in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Nurses Week, as founded by the American Nurses Association;

(2) recognizes the significant contributions of nurses to the health care system in the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Nurses Week with appropriate recognition, ceremonies, activities, and programs to demonstrate the importance of nurses to the everyday lives of patients.

SENATE RESOLUTION 562—DESIGNATING MARCH 25, 2020, AS “NATIONAL CEREBRAL PALSY AWARENESS DAY”

Mrs. LOEFFLER (for herself, Mr. CASEY, and Ms. HASSAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 562

Whereas cerebral palsy is a group of permanent disorders that impact movement and posture and is attributed to nonprogressive disturbances that occur in the developing brain;

Whereas cerebral palsy, the most common motor disability in children, is caused by damage to 1 or more specific areas of the developing brain, which usually occurs during fetal development before, during, or after birth;

Whereas the majority of children who have cerebral palsy are born with the condition, but it may be undetected for months or years;

Whereas 75 percent of individuals with cerebral palsy also have 1 or more developmental disabilities, including epilepsy, an intellectual disability, autism, a visual impairment, or blindness;

Whereas, according to information published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—

(1) the prevalence of cerebral palsy is not changing over time; and

(2) an estimated 1 in 323 children has cerebral palsy;

Whereas approximately 1,000,000 individuals in the United States are affected by cerebral palsy;

Whereas, although there is no cure for cerebral palsy, treatment often improves the capabilities of a child with the condition;

Whereas scientists and researchers are hopeful for breakthroughs in cerebral palsy research;

Whereas researchers across the United States conduct important studies involving cerebral palsy; and

Whereas the Senate can raise awareness of cerebral palsy for the public and within the medical community: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 25, 2020, as “National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day”; and

(2) encourages each individual in the United States to become better informed about and aware of cerebral palsy.

SENATE RESOLUTION 563—DESIGNATING MARCH 2020, AS “NATIONAL WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH”

Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. KAINE, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KING, Mr. JONES, Mr.

MENENDEZ, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. REED, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. ROSEN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. LOEFFLER, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. ERNST) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 563

Whereas National Women's History Month recognizes and spreads awareness of the importance of women in the history of the United States;

Whereas, throughout the history of the United States, whether in their homes, in their workplaces, in schools, in the courts, or during wartime, women have fought for themselves, their families, and all people of the United States;

Whereas, in 1987, President Ronald Reagan issued a Presidential proclamation proclaiming March 1987 as "Women's History Month"; and

Whereas, despite the advancements of women in the United States, much remains to be done to ensure that women realize their full potential as equal members of society in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 2020 as "National Women's History Month";

(2) recognizes the celebration of National Women's History Month as a time to reflect on the many notable contributions that women have made to the United States; and

(3) urges the people of the United States to observe National Women's History Month with appropriate programs and activities.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month to recognize the tremendous achievements women have made for the United States and pay tribute to the vital role they have played in the political, economic, and social development of this Nation.

What began as a local celebration of women in Santa Rosa, California more than 40 years ago, has grown to become a nationally observed month of reflection on the many accomplishments of American women.

Women's History Month gives us the opportunity to honor the many contributions women have made, while also inspiring the next generation of women leaders.

I look upon the courage our predecessors displayed with great admiration, and I continue to be inspired by those who blazed the trail for women like me.

This year, the United States celebrates the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which guarantees women the right to vote. I am inspired by the progress we've made over the past 100 years and hopeful we will continue to build on that momentum toward full equality.

When I first came to Washington in 1992, they called it the "Year of the Woman." Only two other women were serving in the Senate, and four women had just been elected to the chamber, myself included.

Today, 26 women serve in the Senate and 105 women serve in the House, including the only woman to have served as Speaker.

I'm proud to say that my home State of California has now sent 43 women to Congress and leads all other States in this regard.

Even at these historic levels, the number of women in Congress falls far short of the 51 percent of women members we should expect based on the country's demographics.

I have great confidence that future generations of women will continue to rise up and help lead the way in building a better California and United States.

As with government, the business world has been transformed by powerful women at the table, as have the fields of science, music, film, athletics, literature, and many more.

Women also serve in critical roles in the military, with more than 200,000 active-duty servicewomen proudly serving with honor, courage, and distinction and a growing number of women veterans representing every branch of service.

The gains this Nation has made in terms of social progress would not have been possible without the extraordinary efforts of women. As women have fought for themselves, their families, and their communities, so too have they fought for all Americans.

As a senator proudly representing California, I ask you to join me in celebrating the stories and greatness of American women who accomplished so much by continuing to defend the rights they worked so hard to attain.

Thank you Mr. President and I yield the floor.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 38—TO ESTABLISH THE JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES FOR THE INAUGURATION OF THE PRESIDENT-ELECT AND VICE PRESIDENT-ELECT OF THE UNITED STATES ON JANUARY 20, 2021

Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 38

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT COMMITTEE.

There is established a Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies (in this resolution referred to as the "joint committee") consisting of 3 Senators and 3 Members of the House of Representatives, to be appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, respectively. The joint committee is authorized to make the necessary arrangements for the inauguration of the President-elect and Vice President-elect of the United States on January 20, 2021.

SEC. 2. SUPPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE.

The joint committee—

(1) is authorized to utilize appropriate equipment and the services of appropriate personnel of departments and agencies of the Federal Government, under arrangements between the joint committee and the heads

of those departments and agencies, in connection with the inaugural proceedings and ceremonies; and

(2) may accept gifts and donations of goods and services to carry out its responsibilities.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have 5 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They, have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 06, 2020, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 05, 2020, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 06, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 06, 2020, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 06, 2020, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing on the nomination of Justin R. Walker, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

DIRECTING THE REMOVAL OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES FROM HOSTILITIES AGAINST THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN THAT HAVE NOT BEEN AUTHORIZED BY CONGRESS—VETO

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, has the Senate received the President's veto message on S.J. Res. 68?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It has.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the veto message on S.J. Res. 68 be considered as having been read, that it be printed in the RECORD, and spread in full upon the Journal.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The veto message is ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S.J. Res. 68, a joint resolution that purports to direct the President to terminate the use of United States Armed Forces in hostilities against Iran. This indefinite prohibition is unnecessary and dangerous. It would weaken the President's authority in violation of Article II of the Constitution, and endanger the lives of American citizens and brave service members.

This joint resolution is unnecessary because it rests upon a faulty premise. Due to my decisive actions and effective policies, the United States is not engaged in the use of force against Iran. As Commander in Chief, I will always defend our Nation against threats to our security.

In response to an escalating series of attacks by Iran and Iranian-backed militias on United States forces and interests in the Middle East, on January 2, 2020, United States Armed Forces eliminated Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force as he was traveling in Iraq. The purposes of this strike were to protect United States personnel, deter Iran from conducting or supporting further attacks against United States forces and interests, degrade the ability of Iran and Qods Force-backed militias to conduct attacks, and end Iran's strategic escalation of attacks against and threats to United States interests.

On January 7, 2020, Iran launched 16 ballistic missiles against United States and coalition forces in Iraq. These attacks resulted in no fatalities. The next day, in an address to the Nation, I noted that "Iran appears to be standing down" and emphasized that "the United States is ready to embrace peace with all who seek it."

One day later, this resolution was introduced. Its apparent aim was to prevent an escalation in hostilities between the United States and Iran. Yet no such escalation has occurred over the past 4 months, contrary to the often dire and confident predictions of many.

S.J. Res. 68 is also unnecessary because it incorrectly implies that the military airstrike against Qassem Soleimani in Iraq was conducted without statutory authority. The resolution states that "the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (Public Law 107-40; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) against the perpetrators of the 9/11 attack and the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107-243; 50 U.S.C. 1541 notes) do not serve as a specific statutory authorization for use of force against Iran." The strike against Soleimani, however, was fully authorized under both the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 ("2002 AUMF") and the President's constitutional authorities as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

The United States has long relied upon the 2002 AUMF to authorize the use of force for the purpose of establishing a stable, democratic Iraq and for addressing terrorist threats emanating from Iraq. Such uses of force need not address only threats from the Iraqi Government apparatus, but may also address threats to the United States posed by militias, terrorist groups, or other armed groups in Iraq. This has been a consistent application of the statute across Administrations, including the last Administration, which relied upon it to conduct operations in response to attacks and threats by Iran-backed militias in Iraq. Moreover, under Article II, the President is empowered to direct the use of military force to protect the Nation from an attack or threat of imminent attack and to protect important national interests.

In addition, S.J. Res. 68 is dangerous because it could hinder the President's ability to protect United States forces, allies, and partners, including Israel, from the continued threat posed by Iran and Iranian-backed militias. The resolution states that it should not "be construed to prevent the United States from defending itself from imminent attack." But this overlooks the President's need to respond to threats beyond imminent attacks on the United States and its forces.

Protecting the national security of the United States involves taking actions to de-escalate threats around the world, including threats posed by Iran and Iranian-backed militias. Iran and Iranian-backed militias have a long history of attacking United States and coalition forces. As demonstrated by the recent indirect fire attacks on January 26, 2020, on the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad and on March 11 and 14, 2020, on Camp Taji, Iraq, Iran and Iranian-backed militias continue to present a threat. This resolution would impede the President's ability to counter adversarial forces by anticipating their next moves and taking swift actions to address them decisively.

For all of these reasons, I cannot support this joint resolution. My administration has taken strong actions, within statutory authority, to help keep our Nation safe, and I will not approve this resolution, which would undermine my ability to protect American citizens, service members, and interests. Therefore, it is my duty to return S.J. Res. 68 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.
THE WHITE HOUSE, May 6, 2020.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that at 1:30 tomorrow, the Senate vote on passage of S.J. Res. 68, notwithstanding the objections of the President to the contrary.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENT

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, pursuant to Public Law 105-292, as amended by Public Law 106-55, Public Law 107-228, and Public Law 112-75, reappoints the following individual to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: Anthony (Tony) R. Perkins of Louisiana (re-appointment).

ESTABLISHING THE JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES FOR THE INAUGURATION OF THE PRESIDENT-ELECT AND VICE PRESIDENT-ELECT OF THE UNITED STATES ON JANUARY 20, 2021

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Con. Res. 38, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 38) to establish the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies for the inauguration of the President-elect and Vice President-elect of the United States on January 20, 2021.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 38) was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

NATIONAL CEREBRAL PALSY AWARENESS DAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 562, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 562) designating March 25, 2020, as "National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day".

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 562) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.
(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:18 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, May 7, 2020, at 10 a.m.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2020

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

LISA S. KENNA, OF VERMONT, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF PERU.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. JEANNINE M. RYDER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. NORMAN S. WEST

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate May 06, 2020:

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

WILLIAM R. EVANINA, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL COUNTERINTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY CENTER.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to consideration of S. Res. 563, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 563) designating March 2020, as "National Women's History Month".

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 563) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. Now, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, May 7; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the veto message on S.J. Res. 68, under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.