

Hopkins officials and staff creating the vital public health tool, which has already proven itself critical to fighting this disease.

Lord Kelvin stated so long ago:

When you can measure what you are speaking about, and express it in numbers, you know something about it; but when you cannot measure it, when you cannot express it in numbers, your knowledge is of a meagre and unsatisfactory kind.

In the early days of the pandemic in Maryland, our State officials, like officials in most States, were desperately searching for ways to increase testing capacity. Johns Hopkins developed its own coronavirus test to help meet demand.

The university has been especially helpful in Maryland's effort to combat the virus in nursing homes. Johns Hopkins has closely collaborated with local nursing homes to train their employees and test residents to protect our most vulnerable populations.

I commend Johns Hopkins' ingenuity, which has been critical to efforts to identify those afflicted with COVID-19 and to prevent the spread of the virus.

The University of Maryland Medical System has stepped up to lead efforts to address the devastating impact of COVID-19 in our State's minority communities, which is likely due to the underlying healthcare disparities. The university has assembled a team of public health experts to execute the proposed Maryland Health Equity COVID-19 Consortium. The consortium will be critical to the developing of strategies that inform our State's response efforts to protect our communities of color, who are more susceptible to COVID-19.

Despite the immense burden Maryland's small businesses are facing, they have stepped up to help local hospitals, nursing homes, and other frontline workers.

Sagamore Spirits Distillery in Baltimore is one such small business. Sagamore has completely converted its operation to distill corn ethanol to produce hand sanitizers. The distillery is sourcing its corn from Maryland farmers.

Hardwire, an armor company on the Eastern Shore in Pocomoke City, now produces sustainable face shields that can last up to 6 months. By the end of this week, Hardwire will have shipped out 1 million face shields to healthcare workers, first responders, and others on the frontline in the fight against COVID-19. The demand for Hardwire's face shield is so great that it has hired 115 new employees, providing much needed economic relief to communities on the Eastern Shore.

In addition, Maryland's world-leading biomedical and pharmaceutical companies are working tirelessly to find a vaccine for COVID-19.

AstraZeneca, a pharmaceutical and life sciences company with research and development facilities in Gaithersburg and Frederick, has partnered with

the University of Oxford on a potential vaccine that has already entered phase 1 clinical trials.

Emergent BioSolutions in Rockville is collaborating with Johnson & Johnson on its lead COVID-19 vaccine candidate. Emergent BioSolutions will be providing contract development and manufacturing services in Maryland to support Johnson & Johnson's recently announced commitment to supply 1 billion vaccines worldwide.

I would be remiss if I did not also thank Maryland's frontline healthcare workers who risk their lives every day to care for those with COVID-19. These physicians, physician assistants, nurses, lab technicians, EMT personnel, and many others go to work day after day facing the unimaginable strain of caring for patients who are fighting this deadly virus and comforting their families.

These examples are by no means exhaustive. There are countless other healthcare providers, law enforcement agencies, nonprofits, small businesses, higher education institutions, and individual Marylanders pitching in to defeat COVID-19.

Marylanders are stocking grocery shelves, driving buses, delivering groceries to elderly neighbors, hosting virtual events to keep families and young children entertained as they continue to practice social distancing, and they are making homemade face coverings for those who need them. I have seen my neighbors come together to make lunch packs for families in need.

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, "Everybody can be great because anybody can serve." The COVID-19 pandemic is not testing our character; it is revealing it. I am so proud to represent all the great Marylanders who are serving on the frontlines, and I will continue working as hard as I can to ensure that we in Congress are doing everything we can to support them as they lead the fight against COVID-19.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 3608

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, \$3 trillion. As best I can tell, that is how much money the Congress has appropriated—let me amend that. That is how much taxpayer money Congress has appropriated to fight the coronavirus and its aftermath—\$3 trillion. That is 12 zeros. Three trillion dollars is 3,000 billion dollars.

These numbers take my breath away. We spent this money even though we don't have it. We don't even have 5 percent of it. We borrowed every penny. Our national debt will now be approximating, maybe exceeding \$25 trillion.

The last coronavirus bill that we passed, as you know, was the CARES Act, but it was not the only bill. We have passed a number of pieces of legis-

lation to try to fight this virus and the COVID-19 that it causes, and those bills were very hard for me to vote for, not because I don't care about the American people—I do, of course; we all do—but because of the fact that this is such a staggering amount of money.

I have spent my career in government—more at the State government level than the Federal Government level—I have spent my career in government being cheap when it comes to taxpayer money, and it bothers me, as it should bother all of us, that we spent money we don't have.

I have driven all over Washington, DC, and I can't find the money tree. These are taxpayer dollars. But I voted for the bills, including but not limited to the CARES Act, because it was clear we had to do something. We had to appropriate money to fight the virus. We had to appropriate money to help people and their businesses to recover economically from the impact of the virus.

We don't know what works in the CARES Act and what doesn't work, and we won't know for a while. I suspect we will look back and say: Well, this measure was a pretty smart thing to do—and with hindsight, but this measure fell a little bit short.

But already many of my colleagues, and I say this with respect, have other bills to spend even more money, primarily to help State and local government. It is like a Labor Day mattress sale around here, the number of bills flying around. Someone wants to spend another \$250 billion. Somebody else wants to spend \$500 billion and give it to State and local government. Speaker PELOSI wants to spend \$1 trillion. I think all that is premature. I suggest that we pause once again, we see what works, we see what has worked, and see what hasn't worked.

Also, it would seem to me that any fair-minded person would have to conclude that we should open up. Once we open up government and see the economic impact, we will have additional information. And make no mistake about it—we are going to have to open up the economy again. I don't see any reason why we can't both save lives and save jobs.

But I want to make it clear that every single one of these 3 trillion dollars, as far as I am concerned, is a precious commodity because they come from taxpayers.

The discussion that many of my colleagues have been having about spending additional money on top of the \$3 trillion specifically for State and local government seems to forget that we have already appropriated an enormous amount of money to State and local government.

In my State, for example—I will just take Louisiana—I think, as a result of the CARES Act, we are going to receive about \$3½ billion, and I am very grateful for every single penny. This Congress appropriated \$287 million for public schools in Louisiana, \$190 million for universities, \$623 million for

hospitals. We have received extra Medicaid payments. Additionally, Louisianans have received \$1.803 billion for State and local government. You add it all up, and that is about \$3½ billion that has already been appropriated just to Louisiana. Some States got more; some States got less.

So the point I am trying to make is that we need to recognize the fact that we have already done a lot for State government, and we have already done a lot for our cities. And I happily voted for the bill. I had some reluctance for reasons I have explained—just the breathtaking amount of money.

This doesn't mean that our State and local governments are not going to have to sacrifice. We have certainly asked the American people to sacrifice, and we have certainly asked the American business community to sacrifice, and I think State government and local government are going to have to share in that sacrifice. They are going to have to scrub their budgets, and that is just a fact.

As far as I am concerned, the Federal Government needs to do the same thing. There is not a single Member of this body who believes every single penny we spend in the Federal budget is absolutely necessary.

I have a bill that I think may well make it unnecessary to appropriate new money for our State and local governments. I have a bill that I think may well moot the entire issue.

We made one mistake—we probably made others, but in my judgment, I know we made one in the CARES Act when we put restrictions on the amount of money we gave to State and local government. Now, I understand why we did it, and at the time, I supported it. We do not want to bail out States, for example, that have been mismanaged. If a State decides to give generous retirement benefits at an early retirement age to its State employees, as far as I am concerned, that is that State's business, but also, as far as I am concerned, the people of Louisiana shouldn't have to pay for that—what, in my opinion, is mismanagement—and I think a number of my colleagues in the Senate share that sentiment.

But in hindsight—I will take Louisiana as an example. We received \$1.8 billion. There is a requirement in the legislation that says that \$1.8 billion can only be used to defray the expenses of coronavirus expended by the State of Louisiana and by our cities. That is what the statute says. It is the statute passed by Congress that controls.

I am not sure what the Treasury Department issued, but they issued something—they didn't go through the APA—that says: Well, the States—Louisiana, for example, has great flexibility to spend that \$1.8 billion that we received in Louisiana that went to State and local government. They can spend it on first responders and policemen and school teachers. I appreciate the Department of Treasury issuing

whatever it was they issued. I think they called it a directive.

There is just one problem: The statute doesn't say that, and the U.S. Treasury does not have the authority—nor should it—to change a bill passed by the Congress.

So I am grateful to Secretary Mnuchin for trying to help here, but I don't believe what he is doing is legal, and it gives me great pause that State government and our cities might act on a directive from the Treasury that could change 2 weeks from now. I think the only way to address this issue is through a statute passed by Congress.

Here is what my bill would do. My bill would not appropriate any new money. Let me say that again. My bill would not appropriate any new money. My bill would say that, with respect to the \$150 billion that this Congress—unanimously, in the Senate—has already appropriated to help State governments and local governments, which is the \$1.8 billion that I am referring to that Louisiana received, they can use that money for operating expenses.

They can't use it—my bill would specifically prohibit it—to bail out mismanaged retirement systems. They can't use it to bail out any retirement systems, mismanaged or otherwise, but they can use that money, with this small change to the CARES Act, to fill the holes in their budget as a result of any revenue shortfalls.

In my State, for example, we are very heavily reliant on the sales tax and on the personal income tax. I think this measure may well moot the issue of having to appropriate brand new money for States and local governments. The Governors I talked to tell me: Kennedy, look, we really appreciate the money you sent State and local governments. There is just one problem. Our hands are tied. Our problem today is not enough money to fight the virus. Our problem today is, How do we fill a hole as a result of the shortfalls in our sales tax?

That is what my bill would do.

For that reason, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Appropriations be discharged from further consideration of S. 3608—that is my bill—and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask that the Kennedy substitute amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read for a third time and passed; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I clearly appreciate my colleague's remarks. State, local, and Tribal governments across our great country are working tirelessly during this difficult time and

have received Federal funding through the CARES Act, specifically directed to aid in their efforts to keep families safe.

While I understand the spirit of my colleague's proposal, I am very concerned that removing the important limitations related to the appropriate uses of the Coronavirus Relief Fund in the CARES Act would siphon resources away from the coronavirus response efforts that desperately need these resources.

Further, I am unfortunately hearing that some States and localities would simply like to use Federal dollars to backfill their decades of fiscal mismanagement. Hard-working American taxpayers should not be on the hook to bail out poorly run States or to fund areas of State budget expenses that have nothing to do with coronavirus.

We see States like California, Illinois, and New York with big budgets, high taxes, and tons of debt. Contrast that with States like Florida, where we made the hard fiscal decisions to pay off debt and live within our means. Floridians should not be punished and forced to backfill the budgets of these States.

I have a chart here that shows what has happened as a result—I just picked out three States—of their fiscal mismanagement. From 1985 to 2018, you can see here that Florida gained significant population while these poorly managed States lost population. You can see that in Florida we watched our budget and didn't keep borrowing more money. We lived within our means. You can look at our debt—\$27 billion. When you look at California, it is \$155 billion; New York, \$148 billion, and Illinois, \$67 billion.

You see what people are doing. They are leaving these high-tax States. Look at the personal income taxes and look at their attitude toward business. These are the three worst States for business. The Tax Foundation shows how poorly they do with their tax policy.

If you look at what has happened, people have left these States and moved their income to Florida and other lower tax States and more business-oriented States. I am completely opposed to bailing out these States.

Now, the difficulty in my colleague's proposal is that it is very difficult how you decide what is going to be used for one expense in a State budget or another expense in a State budget. Let's not forget that this year's Federal budget deficit will be the largest in the history of our Nation—the largest in the history of our Nation—in excess of the cumulative deficits for the first 200 years of our country's existence.

As my colleague said, we will end the year with an excess of \$25 trillion worth of Federal debt. More than ever, I think my colleague will agree with me that we have to be focused and very careful with our taxpayer dollars.

I am very supportive of continuing to get needed resources to the communities and first responders in need.

That is why, when the Senate passed the CARES Act, we wisely placed limitations on how this money could be spent. We need to maintain those guardrails to ensure that the country can continue on a path to recovery.

For these reasons, Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The Senator from Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO KYLE HOPKINS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, as we all know, it has been an extraordinarily challenging time for our great Nation, a time that has been painful for so many of our fellow Americans.

It has also been a time when people across the country have given so much to their communities, to their States, and to their neighbors. And, as you know, we are a great nation. We are a kind nation. We are a proud nation, and we are a resilient Nation.

This pandemic has been testing the character of our country, and I believe that we are passing the test as Americans. I believe that because I see it everywhere. I certainly see it in my State, the great State of Alaska. People are passing out food, doing what they can for the elderly, tending to those in need. We are seeing this all across our Nation.

We see millions of our fellow citizens—people whom we all have the privilege of representing here in the Senate—stepping up with purpose and resolve. We see a greater appreciation for the dignity and the value of our workers who are on the frontlines of helping us get through this pandemic.

I was recently home in my State. The rule in Alaska is if you travel from the outside, when you get to Alaska, you have a very strict 14-day quarantine. I was quarantined with my wife and three daughters, hunkered down in Anchorage.

Yet I was also able to still appreciate what was happening with so many of our fellow citizens, especially frontline workers who are helping Alaska power through this crisis. So many of them are working day in and day out to ensure that our grocery stores are stocked, that the goods are transported, that buildings are maintained, that our telecommunication systems are running, that our airplanes are flying, that our hospitals are open, that our healthcare workers can give care, and that our extraordinary teachers are finding creative ways to teach our kids. The list goes on and on. It is happening in every State across the Nation.

Last week, I decided to give an impromptu Alaskan of the Week speech in my backyard. It wasn't here on the Senate floor the way we usually do it and the way we are doing it today. I was highlighting these workers. Many of them are part of the Teamsters

Local 959, led by third-generation teamster Gary Dixon. I want to say thank you to them again.

We talk a lot about people who are telecommuting. That is great. It is important to get us through this pandemic, but we also know there are a lot of people who can't do that. They are really our national heroes right now—essential workers on the frontlines, keeping our economies and our supply lines open, moving, robust.

Now that I am back in DC and the Senate is open again—finally, open again—and the business of the Senate is continuing, so does our Alaskan of the Week series from the floor of the Senate. It is one of my favorite times of the week, when I get to focus on a special Alaskan or a group of Alaskans who made Alaska such a great and unique place. I think the Presiding Officer likes it a lot, too.

I had intended, as I mentioned, on my Alaskan of the Week speech here coming back, to focus on more of these frontline workers who are doing so much in our States and so much in our country to get us through this pandemic. However, some really interesting and, I think, exciting news, broke on Monday in our State, as big news born of a tragic situation. And for that reason, I thought we would have a different focus on our Alaskan of the Week.

The Alaskan of the Week this week is an intrepid Alaska reporter, Kyle Hopkins, who led coverage in our local paper, the Anchorage Daily News, that earned him the 2020 Pulitzer Prize for public service. It is probably the most prestigious award in all American journalism—the prize of prizes.

Kyle Hopkins, an Alaska reporter, won that on Monday. He won it for a 17-story series called “Lawless,” about the public safety crisis of rural Alaska and the horrendous issue of sexual assault and domestic violence in our State.

As we all know, we are confronting a pandemic in our country. I live in a great State, but we have a lot of social challenges, just like a lot of States. We are confronting this pandemic right now nationally. My State has been confronting an epidemic of domestic violence and sexual abuse that has been going on for years—decades, generations.

Kyle's series combined dogged reporting and meticulous fact-checking with the utmost sensitivity that a subject like this requires, which is not an easy task at all. It was, according to the Pulitzer committee, riveting public service reporting. It was so much more than that. I will tell you that it was very, very important to the State of Alaska.

Let me tell you a little bit about our Alaskan of the Week, Kyle Hopkins, and what made him very qualified to write this series and why it had such an impact. And I believe—maybe, I should say I hope—it is beginning to bring changes to our public safety sys-

tem and, most importantly, to the unfortunate culture that we have in our State that spawns this kind of abuse and violence.

Kyle was born in beautiful Sitka, AK. That is in Southeast Alaska. His father was a teacher who came from California to teach the children of logging camp workers at a time when the southeast part of our State had a very vital timber industry. The family moved back to California after a few years, but then back to Alaska again, and then away and then back again. Sitka, Kake, Skagway—two small towns, one village—are all in Alaska's beautifully gorgeous southeast. For Kyle, the towns provided the backdrop of a magical childhood—spruce trees that seemed to rise to the clouds, aquatic universes and tidal basins, fish to catch, towering totem poles. High school was all about basketball for him, as it is for so many Alaskan high schoolers and kids. Traveling for tournaments in Alaska is a unique experience, requiring trips on small bush planes.

Kyle remembered seeing the planes and the ferries: “I remember thinking I was lucky to see and do these things.” He knew that even as a young man. He went to the University of Alaska Fairbanks for college, searching for a subject that allowed him to read a lot. He had an adviser that recommended a journalism class. Well, the rest, you could say, is history.

During college, he had a host of internships across the State in journalism, covering business, politics, sports, and crime—all the usual beats—and with some of our best journalism and media establishments, like the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, before moving to Anchorage to work for the Anchorage Press, a weekly paper; then, to KTUU, Channel 2, our big TV station in Alaska; and, then, to where he is now, the Anchorage Daily News.

Throughout all of his reporting, a few things constantly struck him. One is that we are a very big State, but also how few people even in Alaska had ever been to a village in our State. They didn't know the challenges and the beauty of what we call rural Alaska, the soul of Alaska. More than 200 villages dot our State, most of which are not connected by any roads or infrastructure.

He was always struck and increasingly disturbed by the challenge that I mentioned at the outset of my remarks—these very high rates of sexual violence that we have in Alaska. Depending on how you measure it, it is at least three times the national average—three times the national average.

Just like so many of us in Alaska, he assumed that someday the adults, the people in charge, would do something about it, until he realized at a certain point in his life that he was an adult and he had two children, two girls, with his wife Rebecca Palsha, another intrepid reporter in Alaska, and he wanted to make Alaska a better place