

appointed Chairman of the Federal Reserve is saying that those costs are likely greater than the costs of any relief bill. When will our Republican Senate colleagues start to get the message?

Looking at the floor of the U.S. Senate, you would never guess that we are in the middle of a national economic crisis. For 3 weeks, Leader MCCONNELL has not scheduled any legislative business related to the coronavirus. Senate Republican leadership is not even discussing their response to COVID-4 in the House.

Instead, this week, the Republican leader has scheduled five rightwing judges for the floor of the Senate. The Republican chairman of the Homeland Security Committee will hold a hearing tomorrow designed to slander the family of the President's political opponent, delving into a Kremlin-concocted conspiracy theory that has no truth and fell over like a dud in the impeachment hearing. Last night, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee announced that his committee will soon consider subpoenas relating to another conspiracy theory pushed by President Trump, this time to try and rewrite the history of Russian interference in the 2016 election to match the fantasy in President Trump's head. What does Leader MCCONNELL devote more of his floor remarks to today? That wild conspiracy theory aimed at somehow smearing the fine reputation that President Obama has well deserved. It is amazing that was the bulk of the speech.

Leader MCCONNELL, stop listening to President Trump and his wild theories and listen to the American people. We need action. We need action now. Every day, every week, and now almost every month we wait. The recession gets deeper and worse. More people are unemployed. More people lose their jobs, more small businesses are in jeopardy, and we are talking about some wild theory because President Trump demanded it, when everyone knows the President's penchant for truth is at a bare minimum, as exemplified by his hydroxychloroquine comments last night.

Wow. This is unbelievable. In the midst of historic unemployment and economic and health tragedy, Senate Republicans are using their majority to simply block and tackle for the President's reelection campaign. Senate Republicans are using their majority not to tackle the COVID crisis but to block and tackle for the President's reelection campaign. In the midst of a public health crisis, Senate Republicans are diving headfirst into the muck to smear the family—the family—of the President's political opponent.

It is such a gross misuse of the power of the majority. We were sent here to do the Nation's business. At the moment, that means helping our constituents through a time of immense challenge and hardship, but Senate Repub-

licans are using their committees to hold fishing expeditions dictated by the President's Twitter feed, which even his supporters don't usually believe.

If anyone doubts this is about politics; that this is about Senate Republicans doing the bidding of President Trump's personal political agenda, just remember what House Minority Leader MCCARTHY said before the last Presidential election. Leader MCCARTHY went on FOX News bragging that the Republicans put together a Benghazi select committee to bring Hillary Clinton's poll numbers down. Now Senate Republicans are using the same playbook to smear President Trump's political opponents once again. It will not work.

The American people know it is a crisis. They know the Republicans are doing nothing right now. They know that this is political folderol to please President Trump and will not solve America's problems. Rightfully, many Americans are just furious at Senate Republicans using their majority to pursue the President's political agenda in a time of national crisis.

The President is tweeting insane conspiracy theories, demanding that his water carriers on Capitol Hill make them look legitimate. Instead of focusing on testing capacity and policies to safely reopen our country to help so many individuals and businesses that are in need, the President is telling the press that he has taken an unproven treatment, hydroxychloroquine, for a disease he doesn't have. That is reckless.

Please, citizens of America, don't take hydroxychloroquine as a prevention for COVID, and medical experts have said it is not. Remember, it is risky. The FDA has said it has risks. This is a medicine that experts say, at best, may not be effective in treating or preventing COVID-19 and, at worst, causes serious heart problems in patients with certain conditions.

It is astonishingly reckless. I don't know why the President did it. Maybe he has family or friends who stand to benefit from the popularity of this drug. It wouldn't be unlike the President that someone called him who said it is a great drug, and he just talks about it. He has no penchant for research or science or even truth. It just pops into his head, and he thinks it sounds good. He thinks it is a diversion from his failures—which are so many—for dealing with COVID. He just says it. He doesn't care if it hurts people. He just says it. But I do know this. If the President was focused on testing or production of PPE or fashioning a careful plan to reopen the country instead of pushing quack medicines and inventing new conspiracies, the country would be in far better shape than it is today, and the country knows it.

The majority of Americans don't trust the President to handle this crisis, and Senate Republicans just say how high when he says jump, no matter how off base, false, or unrelated to COVID his theories are.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE DiSILVESTRO

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I would like to echo the kind words said by the majority leader about Mike DiSilvestro as he prepares to head into retirement on Friday after 37 years of service to the U.S. Senate.

Mike serves as director of the Office of Senate Security and is in charge of the secure facility here in the Capitol where Senators can receive classified briefings and review sensitive documents. There are very few individuals who have given as much time and attention to this institution as Mike with so little recognition or fanfare—such is the nature of the job—but on the cusp of his retirement, I hope he will allow us to pay him a few compliments.

Mike's counsel is wise. His word can be trusted implicitly. His focus is always on serving the institution, never on politics or party. His judgment and guidance have always been excellent, and he did not rely on subtlety. When you walk into the Senate's secure facility, you pass a World War II-era poster reminding you that "loose lips sink ships." His job has had many difficult responsibilities, and Mike was never more valuable or trusted than in difficult times.

He tracked down absent Senators on 9/11. He comforted terrified staff waiting to be decontaminated after ricin was discovered in Senator Frist's mailroom. During the anthrax incident, he donned a biohazard suit and entered the contaminated Hart building to retrieve vital documents from Senator Daschle's office. Even now, in the middle of a public health crisis, Mike has faithfully reported to duty to make sure this institution is able to complete its constitutional work.

I know he is finding this attention on the floor today uncomfortable. I don't know if he is still here. Yes, sorry for all the flattery, but it is well deserved. He is accustomed to working entirely outside the limelight. He will never be quoted in the paper, and I suspect he will never write a tell-all book about his time in the Senate, but for those of us here, Senators and staffers alike, we will long remember his sense of humor, his devotion to family, his work ethic, and his strong, principled leadership.

There are only a very few staffers who are both known and respected by every single Senator. Mike is one of the few. His absence will be felt by all of us.

Mike, I wish you well. I hope you finally get to play all the golf you want, complete the Appalachian Trail, and that you enjoy every day of your well-earned retirement. Congratulations.

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 executive legislative clerk read the nomination of Scott H. Rash, of Arizona, to be United States District Judge for the District of Arizona.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 579

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, some of you at home may be old enough to remember a distinct circular scar on your upper arm. You may remember a parent or grandparent who had one. That mark was probably one of the world's greatest public health successes—the eradication of the deadly smallpox virus. That so many alive today no longer remember the death and misery caused by this disease is a testament to global efforts in a cooperative manner.

The smallpox virus likely originated more than 3,000 years ago and was one of the most devastating diseases ever in the history of humanity. It was barely visible under the most powerful microscope and was known for fiery bumps covering the face and body, profuse internal bleeding, black vomit, and pieces of destroyed skin that would shed off one's body.

Smallpox is estimated to have killed up to 300 million people in the 20th century—300 million—and around 500 million in the last hundred years of its existence.

In 1967, the World Health Organization launched a historic, intense effort to eradicate smallpox. The global eradication effort initially used a strategy of mass vaccination to achieve 80 percent vaccine coverage in each country and, thereafter, used contact tracing—familiar with the word?—to reduce and rein in additional outbreaks.

Ultimately, the global eradication of smallpox was certified and endorsed in 1980, making it one of the most successful collaborative public health initiatives in the history of the world. In fact, this month marks the 40th anniversary of the World Health Organization's historic achievement: the end of smallpox.

Similar global efforts have been taken to deal with diseases such as polio and Ebola. So imagine my concern and that of the rest of the world that, amid the devastating global coronavirus pandemic, the United States decided just recently to sit out a conference to collaborate and raise

funds to research, manufacture, and distribute a possible coronavirus treatment and vaccine.

Just as with the smallpox effort, such a global collaborative approach makes sense, being both morally and strategically the thing to do to save lives around the world. You see, joining forces with other countries would help speed up the development and eventual distribution of a coronavirus vaccine that we all desperately seek. It would save lives in America, but it would also save lives around the world.

No one knows—no one knows—where the vaccine will eventually be perfected or produced, so we should be on this. The United States should be at the table. We should be part of the collective global effort to find this vaccine.

Clearly, other world leaders get it. They understand the obvious imperative of raising \$8 billion to be spent over the next 2 years. Eight billion dollars is a massive sum of money until you place it up against the price we are currently paying for this virus.

Our allies in the European Union and Norway came to this table that the United States vacated, or refused to attend, and each pledged \$1 billion toward this \$8 billion goal.

Who was absent from this critical effort to save lives around the world, including lives in the United States? Sadly, it was the United States itself. We were not part of this virtual global conference. You see, again, another short-sighted and critically missed opportunity to address the coronavirus, a question about what this administration was thinking. Why were we missing in action when all of these countries came together?

I don't know where this vaccine will be found. It will be a great source of pride if it is in the United States. I have the greatest confidence in the men and women who are researchers and the businesses prepared to produce and develop it. I have the greatest confidence in them. But what if the very safest vaccine, the most effective vaccine, the one that is proven to be the best comes instead from England or Germany? Does that mean we will not use it because it is not the American vaccine? We know better than that. We want the safest, most effective vaccine, wherever it may come from, to be available to the world and, certainly, to the United States of America.

Supporters in Congress said little or nothing when it came to the decision to vacate and to not be present at this international conference. The President has blamed others for problems that we face today, but it was his decision not to participate in this global conference on the vaccine. It could have devastating consequences.

So what does it mean for America? Well, we continue to have some of the world's best researchers: experts at the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and many universities and private

researchers that work across the country and around the world. Many NIH-funded researchers have spent years studying coronaviruses. Their knowledge could help to pave the way for future breakthroughs.

I applaud them, and I have to tell you, for the last 4 or 5 years there has been a quartet of Senators of both political parties who have given dramatic investments to the National Institutes of Health for additional research. We have been led by ROY BLUNT, the Republican chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee, as well as LAMAR ALEXANDER, the Republican chair of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. PATTY MURRAY has always been at the forefront of this effort, and I have done my best to back them up every way possible.

We have had a 30-percent or more increase over the last 4 years in research at the NIH, so I believe in the NIH, and I have made it a major part of the job that I have undertaken here in the U.S. Senate with my bipartisan colleagues.

Clinical trials, we know, are underway at NIH for vaccines. I want to commend that agency; Dr. Fauci, a friend of more than 20 years; and Dr. Collins, the same, for their tireless, unwavering, and inspired effort. But it is plausible, as I mentioned earlier, that the best vaccine candidate may turn up in some other country, not in the United States; that it will be some overseas company that decides to initiate and lead the production of the vaccine.

In a rush to research and validate a vaccine, ramp up production, and address global allocation and supply needs that would ensure affordability and access worldwide, where will the United States stand: in the fray, in the battle, or on the sidelines?

Last week we decided to stay on the sidelines and not to work with global partners to find this vaccine. When the United States pursues a go-it-alone approach while the rest of the world is working together, where does that leave us? That is why last week Senators Schumer, Murray, Leahy, Menendez, Murphy, Duckworth, and nearly three dozen others joined me in introducing a straightforward resolution that calls on the United States to join these global efforts.

I am grateful to organizations like PATH, Shot@Life, Better World Campaign, and the UN Association of the United States for their support of this resolution as well. Quite simply, we should be part of these efforts to not only offer American expertise but to share in lifesaving benefits.

We used to have a profound, well documented, proud bipartisan history of such effort. For example, I was pleased to rally around President Bush's call to stem the scourge of AIDS around the world through the historic PEPFAR Program. Many of my Republican colleagues in the Senate supported these efforts.

Now we face this coronavirus outbreak. I was equally proud of President