

in White House news conferences and as witnesses at marquee hearings—Dr. Monahan has maintained an uncommonly low profile.

He never issued a public statement offering his opinion on whether Congress should reconvene, although he shared his warnings with House leaders and privately told senior Republican officials that his office did not have the capacity to screen all 100 senators for the coronavirus when they returned to work. When Alex M. Azar II, the health secretary, said he would send 1,000 tests to Capitol Hill to accommodate them, Ms. Pelosi and Senator Mitch McConnell, Republican of Kentucky and the majority leader, turned down the offer, wary of the optics of receiving special treatment at a time when testing was scarce—and prompting President Trump to suggest on Twitter that “maybe you need a new Doctor over there.”

Dr. Monahan, who declined to be interviewed, has been a calm and professional voice of reason during the pandemic, according to interviews with more than two dozen lawmakers, Capitol officials and medical professionals who know him. They say he has taken a personal interest in his influential clientele, which also includes the nine Supreme Court justices, even as he fields politically charged questions about reopening, testing and precautionary measures.

Operating out of a nondescript clinic tucked away in the heart of the Capitol, Dr. Monahan and a small staff have been exceedingly busy since the pandemic took hold, consulting with lawmakers who have contracted Covid-19 or exposed to someone infected with it, doling out health recommendations in detailed memos ahead of votes, and producing a series of videos released on an internal website to educate lawmakers and their staff on how to protect themselves.

Dr. Monahan has filmed and produced the videos by himself in his office, often seated next to an elaborate bouquet of white flowers and a tiny plastic model of a pangolin, the scaly mammal that may have been an intermediary carrier of the virus.

In the videos, he typically walks through the most recent recommendations offered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and demonstrates medical equipment, such as a thermometer and a variety of masks (including one made by his wife, using a black shopping bag and a sewing machine). “He has a big job—two houses of Congress, two parties to deal with—but he’s not political in any way,” Ms. Pelosi said. “He treats us all with respect, and we respect his judgment in return.”

Dr. Monahan in 2009 became the seventh man to serve as attending physician, taking up a position that has always been held by a Navy doctor. The House first approved a Navy officer to work out of the Democratic cloakroom in 1928 after one lawmaker died and two collapsed, with several hours passing before a doctor could arrive in each case. Two years later, the Senate extended that doctor’s jurisdiction to include its own members, leading to the establishment of the Office of the Attending Physician.

The office provides care to lawmakers for a fee, as well as offering some services and emergency care to staff and tourists. The first physician, Dr. George W. Calver, who began his work just before the start of the Great Depression, displayed placards in cloakrooms and elevators across the Capitol with his nine “Commandments of Health,” including “Accept Inevitables (don’t worry)” and “Relax Completely.”

Dr. Monahan was born in Connecticut, the son of Irish immigrants who came to the United States in the 1950s. His mother grew up in Kilkee, while his father grew up in a house with a thatched roof without running

water or electricity in Lissyscasey. The first in his family to attend college, he worked full-time at a supermarket while commuting in a yellow Volkswagen Beetle to Fairfield University, a Jesuit college—an education, he would tell graduates in 2011, that meant, “you are called to be ‘men and women for others.’”

He studied biology and chemistry, and after graduating, joined the Navy through its Health Professions Scholarship Program, enticed in part by the offer of free tuition and a living allowance in exchange for a commitment to three years of service.

“Brian was always the smartest kid in the class,” said Dr. William Dahut, a medical oncologist who spent time with him in both medical school and the Navy. “If there was a publication or data, Brian knew that data and knew that well.”

In 1989, as a resident in the cardiology ward in what was then the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., he treated a 39-year-old woman for potentially fatal cardiac arrhythmias. The patient had taken the popular antihistamine Seldane, and his contribution to research on that medicine—and its connection to the arrhythmias—later helped lead to its removal from the market.

Dr. Monahan rose through the ranks of the Navy, becoming a professor of medicine and pathology at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Maryland, as well as participating in a number of national organizations related to cancer, oncology and hematology.

While serving as the Chairman of the Department of Medicine at the university, he received a call for a meeting in which officials with congressional leadership asked him to become the attending physician on Capitol Hill when his predecessor retired.

He has since become a fixture on Capitol Hill, participating in congressional trips and functions and releasing health assessments for presidential and vice-presidential contenders, including Senators Bernie Sanders, the Vermont independent, and Tim Kaine, Democrat of Virginia. (Mr. Kaine also asked him for “a tuneup” before hiking the Virginia section of the Appalachian Trail.)

In 2016, it was Dr. Monahan’s assessment of Justice Antonin Scalia’s health at the time of his death—including sleep apnea, coronary artery disease, obesity and diabetes—that influenced the decision to decline an autopsy of the justice. The Associated Press reported at the time.

“He was the one who advised me to go to the hospital,” said Representative Ben McAdams, Democrat of Utah and one of the first lawmakers to contract the virus, said of Dr. Monahan. “He was clear: ‘I strongly recommend you go to the hospital—this is serious.’”

The congressman has spoken with the doctor at least a dozen times since, he said in an interview on Thursday—but had yet to meet Dr. Monahan in person.

An avid photographer, Dr. Monahan’s photos are present in offices around the Capitol—and he has been known to offer advice on how to best capture a scenic landmark or vista on trips overseas.

He checks in with his powerful patients frequently, including long after they have recovered.

“I’ve been around for a long period of time, and he just takes more of a personal interest than anyone else I’ve ever known in that position,” said Senator James M. Inhofe, Republican of Oklahoma and chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, who has been on Capitol Hill for more than three decades. “He just seems to be genuinely interested in me—and he’s that way with everybody.”

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, we thank the good doctor for all he

does for this institution and for his country.

#### 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 Anna M. Manasco, of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama.

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

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

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, we are going to complete 3 weeks of Senate activity, called together by Senator McCONNELL at a time when the House of Representatives, under the guidance of Dr. Monahan, who was just praised—and I join in that praise—was not in session when the Senate came to session.

I said at the time that it was our responsibility to be here. That is why we ran for office. Important things need to be decided, and we need to be part of it for the good of the Nation.

We are about to complete 3 straight weeks without one measure on the floor of the Senate relating to the national public health emergency—not one. There have been hearings in some committees, yes, but activity on the floor of the Senate, no. No bill was brought to the floor.

In fact, there was an attempt yesterday to bring a resolution that said the United States should be involved in the global international effort to find a vaccine. It was objected to on the Republican side. The reason the Senator objected to it—the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—is that he wants to take up the measure in his committee at some later date. I encourage that Senator to do it quickly.

I think there is a sense of urgency across America in terms of this national health emergency that we face.

Yet there is not a sense of urgency on the Republican side of the aisle, despite the fact that for 3 weeks we have not considered one measure on the floor related to this COVID-19 virus, which is unexplainable and indefensible.

Senator MCCONNELL, of Kentucky, has told us that he doesn't sense the urgency for us to take up the measure passed last week by the House of Representatives. This was a bipartisan measure that was brought to the floor of the House of Representatives, which attempted to move us forward from the original CARES Act, the \$3 trillion of cumulative spending that we have focused on the economy and the public health challenge facing our Nation.

Is there any urgency to it? Well, I sense that urgency every time I pick up the phone or read the newspaper in my State of Illinois. I am on conference call after conference call with groups across our State that are concerned about economic issues, as well as public health issues. There is truly a sense of urgency where I live. I cannot believe that Senator MCCONNELL doesn't sense it in his own State of Kentucky.

Kentucky hospitals and healthcare providers have received \$900 million in CARES Act funding. I don't question whether they were deserving or needed it; we received funds, as well, in the State of Illinois. But the Kentucky Hospital Association tells us that the hospitals in Kentucky are expected to lose \$1.3 billion in March and April alone.

You know, we are next door to Kentucky, and my hospitals in downstate southern Illinois, right next to Kentucky, have told me the same thing. They are losing money right and left. Do they think this is an urgent problem in Illinois? You bet they do, and I will bet the hospitals in Kentucky do as well.

This is what the vice president of the Kentucky Hospital Association, Carl Herde, said: "Since there is no clear path to recoup these losses, the hospitals are left with no choice but to look at their own operations to cut as much cost as they possibly can."

The University of Kentucky is projecting a \$160 million loss for its healthcare system. It has furloughed 1,500 employees. Jenny Stuart Health in Hopkinsville, KY, has furloughed 248 staff members. Appalachian Regional Health in Lexington will furlough 500 employees. St. Claire Health in Morehead is furloughing 300. Pikeville Medical Center has furloughed 200.

Is there a sense of urgency in these communities, when many of these hospitals are the largest employers in town and hundreds of people are being furloughed because of the COVID virus, because of the fact that they cannot resume ordinary hospital operations with this shadow of infection hanging over them?

The bill that passed the House of Representatives last week, which we

did not consider or even discuss, to my knowledge, in the Senate this week, the HEROES Act, called for more than \$100 billion more in relief to hospitals. How important is that?

I know how important it is in Illinois; I can tell you flat-out. As a downstater, when you take a look at the rural and smalltown hospitals in my State, they are struggling.

One hospital administrator told me that she had scheduled four elective surgeries last Monday, a week ago, and only one patient showed up. The other three called in and said they were too frightened to go to the hospital and run the risk of being exposed to the COVID virus. I cannot imagine there is not the same situation going on in Kentucky.

Isn't there a sense of urgency in Kentucky, as in Illinois, for us to move and move quickly to help these hospitals before they furlough more people and ultimately face closure—a disaster in any community that we want to urgently avoid?

State and local governments are struggling now to pay teachers, first responders, and healthcare workers as they face record revenue losses and increased costs of fighting the virus. The measure that passed the House of Representatives last week had almost \$1 trillion to help these State and local governments—not just in Illinois but in every State, including the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

In States around the country, red and blue—the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that States will lose \$650 billion in revenues by next summer. By the end of the year, Kentucky is expected to lose between 10 and 17 percent of its annual revenues. Without help from the Federal Government, Kentucky's Governor announced that Kentucky's "recession will be longer or unemployment will be greater."

Congress appropriated \$150 billion in funding for State and local governments in the original CARES Act, but that funding is not enough to make up for the enormous losses that are being faced by State and local governments across the United States. These Governors, these mayors, these leaders have a sense of urgency in making up this revenue. They face the reality of cutbacks in police, firefighters, first responders, paramedics, nurses, doctors, and teachers.

The HEROES Act which passed the House of Representatives last week and which has not been considered this week in the Senate included \$875 billion in fiscal relief for State and localities to help cover the shortfall to make sure communities can continue to pay frontline essential workers.

Understand the deadlines that were built into the CARES Act. The first deadline is June 8. That is the date by which small businesses that borrowed money under the payroll protection part of that act need to have spent the money in order to have the loan forgiven—June 8.

Who among us believes that small businesses will be in a position to recover and get back to business as usual by June? I pray that is the case, but I know better in my home State and I will bet you in the State of Kentucky as well.

How about unemployment? We came through in the CARES Act and did something dramatic and unprecedented. We said that we were going to give an extra payment, a Federal payment, to those who were unemployed so that they could weather this storm as their families try to adjust to no breadwinner in the house—\$600 a week on top of whatever the State benefit of unemployment might be. For some families, it was just enough to get by.

Understand, though, that benefit—that unemployment benefit of \$600 from the Federal Government each week—is going to end at the end of July. That is not that far way. We are talking about 10 weeks at the most. Do we honestly believe the unemployment crisis, with 36 million unemployed Americans, will be behind us by the end of July? I wish that were the case, but we know better. In my State of Illinois, I know better.

We are hoping to start reopening the economy in a safe, responsible, careful way and to give these small businesses a fighting chance to open their doors again and survive, but it is going to be a struggle, and many of them won't make it.

Earlier this month, 69,000 people filed new unemployment claims in Kentucky—a 4,000-percent increase from last year. Do those families who are now unemployed feel that this response, this Federal assistance in unemployment benefits, is urgent? Well, you bet it is. How many of those in Illinois or Kentucky believe they won't need this help after the end of July this year? July—the same month the \$600-per-week unemployment benefits expire—the unemployment rate in Kentucky has been projected to be 16.3 percent—the 10th highest in the Nation. Yet the Republican leader says there is no sense of urgency in moving on this measure that was considered by the House of Representatives and passed last week.

The IRS has sent out almost 2 million economic impact payments to that State of Kentucky, worth more than \$3 billion, helping families put food on the table and pay their rent and their mortgage.

When you take a look at that economic impact payment, understand that the measure that passed the House, which we did not bring to the floor this week in the U.S. Senate, calls for \$1,200 more for each adult and \$1,200 for each child. Do families need it in Illinois? You bet they do.

Even though it was originally proposed by President Trump, politics had nothing to do with the support that it received from both political parties—the support that this measure that just passed the House should receive from

both parties here in the Senate as well. There is a sense of urgency when it comes to these cash payments to people who are struggling to make ends meet. The bill that passed the House includes a second round of these critical payments and makes sure that we extend the unemployment benefits beyond the end of July.

According to the Kentucky Center for Economic Policy, tens of thousands of Kentuckians have lost their health insurance as a result of this pandemic. What a moment in life to lose your health insurance—in the midst of a pandemic, with people facing hospitalizations, treatment in and out of the hospital and in some cases ICUs, to think that you would be without health insurance?

The measure that passed the House of Representatives last week, which was not brought to the floor by the Republicans this week in the Senate, includes a provision to ensure that people who have lost their health insurance as a result of becoming unemployed can remain on their employer healthcare plan without paying any premiums. In other words, we want to make sure that people have health insurance rather than lose it. Was that brought up this week for debate and consideration in the Senate? No. No, it wasn't. Is it a matter of urgency if you are facing the loss of health insurance in the middle of this coronavirus epidemic? Of course it is.

The Paycheck Protection Program still has funding left in it to provide some loans, but businesses have to spend the money within 8 weeks of receiving the loan or it won't be forgiven. Many small business owners across the United States are facing a June 8 deadline, struggling to spend the money due to the fact that they still haven't been able to open their doors.

The HEROES Act, which passed the House of Representatives and was not brought up for consideration in the Senate this week, which it could have been, would extend the deadline an additional 16 weeks, providing small businesses 24 weeks to spend the money they were loaned by the SBA, and it would authorize the Paycheck Protection Program through the end of the year to ensure that we can continue to help small businesses through this difficult time.

Is there a sense of urgency in small businesses in my State to extend this period that you can spend the money as a small business and have your loan forgiven? Of course there is a sense of urgency in Illinois, in North Carolina, in Georgia, and in Kentucky—across the United States. Why the Senate Republican leader does not feel a sense of urgency on this measure, which ultimately ends on June 30, is beyond me.

I have heard from farmers across my State who are struggling to survive, asking for help. I have heard from the Census Bureau about the need to push back its response deadline to October 31—measures also included in the HE-

ROES Act that passed the House of Representatives.

Three weeks have ended here on the floor of the Senate, and, but for a few speeches on this floor, if you read the record of legislative activity, you would wonder if the leaders in the Senate even realize we are facing a pandemic. We have spent our time on nomination after nomination. We have spent our time in hearings on friends and those who pass political muster who want lifetime appointments to the Federal court. But somehow we have managed to miss the biggest story in America—the pandemic.

I would say to Senator MCCONNELL and the Republican leadership: We have wasted an opportunity—a 3-week opportunity—to move forward, and we have particularly wasted this week when we could have taken up the measure that passed the House of Representatives last week.

Are we prepared to negotiate a compromise? Of course we are. We have done that every time we have brought up a measure related to the pandemic. It should be bipartisan in the end. But to say it is “dead on arrival” and there is no sense of urgency among the Republicans in the Senate to take up this measure is to ignore the obvious. Whether it is \$1,200 payments to American citizens who are struggling to get by, whether it is an increased period of time for qualification to receive unemployment insurance, whether it is loans to small businesses so they can survive, these are the urgent needs of America.

When we have hospitals furloughing employees in Illinois, in Kentucky, and around the Nation, we run the risk of losing these great hospitals that are needed for the future.

Is it urgent that we take up this matter? Of course it is. Yet this week we have done nothing, zero, when it comes to this measure.

We are going to leave now for the Memorial Day week, which means it will be about 2 weeks before we return. I can just about guarantee that the sense of urgency across America will be palpable at that time. The question is whether there will be a sense of urgency felt by the Republican leader from the State of Kentucky.

The other day, my friend and colleague from Texas, Senator CORNYN, came to the floor, as he has before, to discuss the issue of liability and immunity as part of the conversation on the next measure of relief and rescue for our economy.

For weeks, Senator MCCONNELL and Senator CORNYN have said that unless Congress gives broad legal immunity to corporations, they would block emergency aid to help States and local governments avoid massive layoffs of policemen, firefighters, and teachers. The logic behind this position is hard to fathom.

There has been no flood of COVID-19 lawsuits. There is a website maintained by the law firm Hunton Andrews Kurth

that tracks all the lawsuits filed in America based on COVID-19. Senator MCCONNELL has cited this tracking. That tracker updated its numbers as of yesterday. It reported that out of 1.5 million confirmed COVID-19 cases and 90,000 deaths, there have been 2—2—COVID-19 medical malpractice cases filed in the United States in over 1,000 complaints that have been filed and 26 cases alleging workplace exposure to COVID-19. The Senator from Kentucky has called this a tidal wave of lawsuits, a windfall for trial lawyers—2 cases of medical malpractice and 26 cases for workplace exposure?

The other cases that mention COVID-19 relate to prisoners in prisons and jails, who are questioning whether their rights are being violated because of the health circumstances in the prisons. There are lawsuits against insurance companies as to whether the policy covers a business that has suffered losses because of the COVID virus. There have been lawsuits as well between businesses as to responsibility for it. But this notion of a tidal wave of lawsuits being filed—2 medical malpractice cases across the United States of America and 26 workplace exposure cases.

Keep in mind that if you do get sick and you want to file a lawsuit, a good lawyer will advise you: Be careful. Proving where you were infected is not an easy thing. And they also look at the standard of conduct of the business or individual who could be the defendant. Did they act reasonably?

We had a hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee last week on liability during the COVID-19 pandemic. I have quoted this before, but it is worth repeating. One of the witnesses called by the Republicans was a very good man, very thoughtful. His name is Kevin Smartt, and he is the chief executive officer and president of Kwik Chek Foods in Bonham, TX. He went through a litany of things that he had done in his workplace to make it safer, not just for his employees but also for the customers who came in. It was impressive. If the statements he made to us were accurate—and I believe they were—he is doing his part to try to make his workplace safer.

Here is what he said:

This was a challenge because the guidance provided by the CDC, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, as well as state and local governments, often conflicted with one another in addition to being vague and difficult to follow. Yet, despite many uncertainties, including the constantly fluctuating public health guidelines, we began to adjust to the pandemic.

The point I am making—and I see our Democratic leader on the floor; I am going to wrap it up quickly—the point I am making is this: We should establish reasonable standards through the Centers for Disease Control and OSHA so that conscientious businesses can in good faith know what needs to be done to protect their employees and their customers. When they follow those guidelines, I believe they have absolved

themselves of liability. They certainly have a valid defense to any claims of wrongdoing. But this notion that comes before us on the floor from the Republican side goes to an extreme—asking for government immunity from the conduct of businesses in the midst of this pandemic without holding them to any standards. We are still waiting for an explanation. Why would we allow the workplace to be more dangerous for employees? Why would we allow the business place to be more dangerous for customers?

If the owner is willing to live up to reasonable standards established based on science and health, in my mind, that is a good defense, and that is the way it should be. To do otherwise is to give a green light to businesses that don't follow standards, endangering their workers, their employees. It means more people are going to get infected and sick in America—the last thing we need.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first I want to thank my friend and colleague, the senior Senator from the State of Illinois. He is always on the money, pushing this country to do what its better angels recommend, and I hope America listens to his floor speech today and every day because what he is doing would make America a better, stronger, more unified, more humane, and more compassionate place.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to inflict our country, businesses are suffering, families are struggling to pay the rent, millions of Americans are filing for unemployment every single week, and tens of thousands of Americans are dying.

Every aspect of American society has been changed by this crisis—except, perhaps, the Republican Senate. Here it is business as usual.

Leader MCCONNELL has spent 3 weeks of the Senate's time largely on nominations, only one of whom is directly related to COVID-19. There is not one bill on the floor of the Senate having to do with COVID in the entire month of May. The leader has put none on the floor.

Democrats have had to relentlessly pressure our colleagues to hold even the most routine and needed oversight hearings on the coronavirus. Coronavirus is raging, and people are upset about how the administration is implementing it. We don't have hearings until we push, push, push for them, and then they happen few, far between, and too late.

It would be one thing if the Republican majority were doing this other business while negotiating with Democrats on the next phase of emergency relief, but Republicans are not negotiating about the next phase of emergency relief. Many of my colleagues on

the other side have said that more relief just isn't necessary.

The Republican leader rejected legislation from the House of Representatives before the bill was even drafted—a knee-jerk partisan response at a time when we should be working together to help our suffering constituents. For the life of me, I don't know why it has been so difficult to get our friends on the other side to focus on the ongoing national crisis, and it appears that the lack of focus, the lack of urgency, and the lack of compassion from the Republican majority are about to get even worse.

Today, in the Homeland Security Committee, the Republican chairman has convened a hearing that slanders the family of the President's political opponent. Believe it or not, this powerful Senate committee, with broad jurisdiction over so many aspects of the government's response to the ongoing pandemic, is prioritizing yet another attempt to smear Vice President Biden. The committee could be holding a hearing today with the FEMA Administrator to discuss disaster assistance. But, no, the highest priority of Senate Republicans lies in promoting conspiracy theories that have already been discredited on numerous occasions—conspiracy theories, which, by the way, are known to be part of Russian disinformation campaigns. Our Republican majority is using Russian propaganda to try to damage a political opponent. Is that a disgrace? Is that a disgrace?

The Republican chairman is pressing forward, without Members even receiving a briefing from the intelligence community. Even more shameful, the company my colleague from Wisconsin wants to subpoena is cooperating with the committee in providing documents. It appears this subpoena is just for show—a way to create the false impression of wrongdoing. It is like in a Third World dictatorship, a show trial with no basis in fact, with no due process, and with no reality.

Not to be outdone, the Republican chairman of the Judiciary Committee has asked members of his committee to consider subpoenas related to yet another conspiracy theory pushed by President Trump—a theory that attempts to rewrite the history of Russian interference in the 2016 election to match the fiction in President Trump's head. It seems Republicans want to dive into the deepest muck of right-wing conspiracy to invent scapegoats for the President to use in his reelection campaign.

The conspiracy caucus is back. It reared its ugly head in December and has been on a simmer ever since. Now it is boiling over once again, shamefully, in the middle of a public health crisis and an economic disaster that require all of us to focus on the problems at hand.

Senate Republicans aren't drafting legislation to help the unemployed. They are holding sham hearings about

the family of the President's political rival. Senate Republicans aren't debating measures to increase testing. They are turning Senate committee rooms into the studio of "FOX & Friends." Senate Republicans are not just ignoring the coronavirus. They are practically sprinting toward a partisan election, making this Chamber part of a reelection campaign—not what it was ever intended to be by the Founding Fathers or anyone else, until this fever to bow down to President Trump's wild conspiracy theories that has overtaken just about every Senate Republican.

Here is what Chairman GRAHAM said about his "investigation" yesterday. Here is what he said:

I want to get all the information out there. I want to do it before the election.

Well, there is a Republican intention right there—"do it before the election."

Leader MCCONNELL says that Republicans have not felt the urgency yet to act on the coronavirus, but it sure sounds like there is some urgency to get these phony investigations going before November. A fever is raging in the conspiracy caucus. They are worried about the outcome of the election. They are worried that President Trump—they know—has done a very poor job in dealing with this crisis. So they turn to wild conspiracy theories and turn the Senate, which should be debating and discussing coronavirus relief, into sort of a partisan sham Chamber. It is disgraceful.

Now, Leader MCCONNELL gave a lengthy speech on the floor of the Senate yesterday giving cover to many of the President's crackpot theories about what transpired in 2016. I will just say this: Leader MCCONNELL reportedly watered down a bipartisan warning about Russian interference in the fall of 2016. He stalled for years on election security funding, and still, to this day, is blocking election security funding. If Leader MCCONNELL wants to look back at the history of Russian interference in the 2016 election, he should look in the mirror. He might not like the way his own role is viewed.

The American people should be just furious with Washington Republicans, and so many are—more and more every day. Americans are waiting in modern-day breadlines, jammed into municipal buildings, and cars snaked around parking lots and city blocks. It is so sad to look at these pictures. Doctors and nurses and other caregivers have been working nonstop to save American lives, often without the proper equipment. Millions of American workers are sitting at home, having lost their jobs, through no fault of their own, dreading the day the next rent payment comes due. Here in Washington, Senate Republicans feel no urgency to help these Americans. They are too busy touting conspiracy theories and electioneering for the President.

Speaking of the President, he was here yesterday on the Capitol to have

lunch with Senate Republicans. They had a giant pep rally. They got all fired up to do nothing. That was the conclusion. On the way out of the Capitol, the President was asked about the fact that the United States leads the world in confirmed cases of coronavirus, and here is what President Trump said—amazingly. Listen to this. Asked about leading the world in confirmed cases of coronavirus, the President said:

I don't look at that as a bad thing. I look at that in a certain respect as being a good thing because it means our testing is much better. . . . So I view it as a badge of honor.

Really? First of all, our testing is not much better. States are struggling to get people tested due to confusion and a lack of national leadership. Many experts believe we are far short on what we need on testing. None of these experts, who actually understands the testing and this virus, would say the President deserves a badge of honor for his work. But even more galling is the idea that lots of cases of coronavirus is “a good thing.” That is what the President said: Having lots of cases of coronavirus is “a good thing.”

A lot of cases is not “a good thing,” Mr. President. It means people are sick and people are dying. A lot of cases means more Americans are in the hospital, more Americans in ICU struggling to breathe on ventilators. A lot of cases means Americans will die as a result of the virus that has already claimed the lives of nearly 100,000. A lot of cases means a lot more Americans are seriously ill. Mr. President, that is not “a good thing.” Even your mind, which seems so warped at times, cannot really believe that.

There is no “honor” in leading the world in the number of people infected with coronavirus. For the United States to have 1.5 million cases is nothing to celebrate. It is something to be ashamed of. Calling it a “badge of honor” isn't just wrong, it is sick, and it is an insult to every American family who loses a loved one to this evil disease.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded, and I ask unanimous consent that I be able to conclude my remarks before the 11 o'clock vote.

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

5G

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, the internet has been a part of our daily lives for quite a while now: Netflix, Twitter, and Amazon. The internet has taken on new importance during the coronavirus pandemic. It has become the main source of connection with friends and family. It has enabled many people to work from home to help reduce the spread of the virus. It

is the main reason that schools and colleges have been able to continue teaching students.

It has drastically expanded nascent services, like telehealth, which has allowed doctors and other medical professionals to provide patient care remotely.

With all of this new internet traffic, of course, has come a much greater load on networks. Not all countries' networks have held up to the strain. In Europe, networks have had to slow streaming and ask providers like Netflix to diminish the quality of their videos.

Here in the United States, our networks have faced very few problems, and there is a reason for that. Europe and the United States have very different regulatory regimes for the internet. In Europe, the internet has been regulated using outdated communications rules designed for telephone monopolies. This has resulted in heavy-handed regulation, which has discouraged companies from investing in communications infrastructure and broadband expansion.

The resulting lack of reliable infrastructure is the primary reason internet performance in Europe has suffered during the pandemic. The regulatory situation in the United States, on the other hand, has been much different. With a few exceptions, like the brief imposition of so-called net neutrality regulations in 2015, our country has taken a light-touch approach to internet regulation.

This has encouraged companies to invest in the latest communications infrastructure and new technologies to make more efficient use of spectrum. Thanks to that investment, when coronavirus hit and internet usage soared, American networks were ready. Despite the additional burden on networks during the pandemic, Americans have been able to enjoy the same high speeds and streaming quality that they typically enjoy. Right now, most Americans are using 4G networks.

The next generation of internet, 5G, is here. 5G networks are starting to be deployed, including in my home State of South Dakota. If we want the United States to handle 5G the way that we handled 4G and if we want our 5G networks to be as successful as our 4G networks, we still have some work to do.

One thing that is absolutely essential is maintaining the light-touch regulatory approach that has produced so much U.S. investment and innovation. Despite the success of light-touch regulation, there is always a segment of the Democratic Party pushing for greater government regulation of the internet, and that would chill American broadband investment.

When Democrats briefly succeeded in forcing through heavier government regulations in the latter part of the Obama Presidency, broadband infrastructure investment by U.S. companies dropped significantly, and it only rebounded when the Federal Commu-

nications Commission, under Chairman Pai, rolled back these heavyhanded regulations.

Second, the United States still has more work to do to deploy the infrastructure necessary for 5G. While 4G relies on traditional cell phone towers, 5G technology will also require small antennas called “small cells” that can often be attached to existing infrastructure, like utility poles or buildings.

Last year, I introduced legislation, the STREAMLINE Act, to make it easier for companies to deploy these small cells so that we can get the infrastructure in place for 5G technology. We also need to update Federal regulations to ensure that it doesn't take months or years to get permits for wireless infrastructure.

Infrastructure is a key part of the 5G equation. The other key part is spectrum. Like all internet technology, 5G relies on radio spectrum—what we commonly call the airwaves. Radio spectrum is divided into bands—low band, mid band, and high band. 5G will rely upon all three.

The United States has done a good job freeing up high-band spectrum for 5G, but we still need to free up more mid-band spectrum to see full-scale 5G deployment.

In 2018, Congress passed my MOBILE NOW Act, which helped lay the groundwork for freeing up more mid-band spectrum.

This past November, Senator WICKER and I introduced the 5G Spectrum Act to require the Federal Communications Commission to free up a critical portion of mid-band spectrum, commonly referred to as the C-band for 5G use.

While Congress did not enact our legislation at the end of February, the Federal Communications Commission announced that it would adopt a framework similar to that outlined in our bill to make 280 megahertz of C-band spectrum available for 5G.

Finally, we need to ensure that we have the workforce in place to handle the demands of installing and maintaining 5G technology. It is estimated that deploying the necessary infrastructure for 5G will create approximately 50,000 new construction jobs each year over the build-out period, and that is just for construction.

Right now, there simply aren't enough workers with the necessary training to meet the needs of nationwide 5G. Earlier this year, I introduced the Telecommunications Skilled Workforce Act. My bill would help to increase the number of workers enrolled in 5G training programs and identify ways to grow the telecommunications workforce to meet the demands of 5G.

The coronavirus has shown us the result of robust investment in 4G infrastructure and spectrum—strong networks that can handle steep surge in internet traffic. We need to make sure that we are putting in the necessary work and investment to ensure that our 5G networks are just as strong.

The 5G future is here. Let's make sure that the United States is ready.

#### CORONAVIRUS

Madam President, before we vote here in just a few minutes, I want to just make a couple of remarks with respect to coronavirus legislation. We have heard some of our colleagues on the Democrat side come down here and attack Republicans for not wanting to do more legislation and more spending, which is, as they know, completely not accurate. Republicans are prepared to do whatever it takes to help America recover from the coronavirus effects and to deal with the health emergency, which is why we have invested tens of billions of dollars in vaccines and antiviral therapeutics and testing—all the things that are necessary to get this healthcare crisis dealt with in a way that would allow Americans the confidence to get back out in the economy.

Secondly, dealing with the economic impacts, which have been many, the bills that we passed so far—we passed four—and the combined amount of the spending in those four bills are almost \$3 trillion. It is focused on families, getting direct assistance into the hands of American families. It is focused on workers, keeping workers employed. This Paycheck Protection Program has clearly been one that has allowed a lot of small businesses to continue to operate and to continue to keep their workers employed. It is focused on those who, through no fault of their own, have lost jobs, with a significant plus-up in unemployment insurance accounts, supported at the State level but significantly increased in terms of funding from the Federal Government.

Of course, as I said earlier, it is focused very directly on those healthcare professionals or healthcare workers on the frontlines, to make sure that they have PPE and ventilators, all the things not only to protect themselves but to care for the patients whom they are entrusted to care for. As I said before, investing heavily in those things will help us fight and win and beat the coronavirus—the vaccines, the antiviral therapeutics, and the testing. Those are all things that we have done already.

Now, what you saw last week was the House of Representatives blow into town for a 24-hour period to pass a massive \$3 trillion bill filled up with all kinds of goodies in a gift bag for special interest groups that they care about but that have little to do with addressing the fundamental challenges facing this country with respect to the coronavirus.

I would argue that not only do they not know what the need is but that many of the dollars we have already pushed out are still in the pipeline and haven't been used. We don't know what our State and local governments need in terms of revenue replacement, and we have lots of dollars that are still going out to hospitals, healthcare pro-

viders, and nursing homes, much of which hasn't been spent yet. Of course we have the Paycheck Protection Program, which we are burning through fairly quickly but hasn't run out of funding yet either. As I said, those are all the things—the almost \$3 trillion—that have been disbursed and distributed already to address this crisis.

What Democrats did last week in the House of Representatives is that they came in with a philosophical, ideological wish list—a fantasy, if you will—of all of the things they would like to get done, very few of which actually deal with the crisis at hand, so much so that their bill—1,800 pages long, \$3 trillion in new spending, again, without knowing what the effect is of dollars already spent or what the need is out there for additional spending—included things like funding for studies on diversity and inclusion in the marketing of cannabis. Is that really something that is relevant to fighting and battling the coronavirus? They included in there tax increases for small businesses. The one tax cut they included in their bill dramatically cuts taxes for millionaires and billionaires. In fact, 56 percent of that tax cut would go to the top 1 percent of wage earners in this country. Those are the types of things that were included in that bill. It really was an ideological wish list—nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else.

So for Democratic leaders to come down here and suggest for a minute that what the House did somehow ought to be something that the Senate contemplates or considers doing here is just completely missing the point of what the American people need in this crisis, and that is certainty. They need to know that we are dealing with the health emergency. They need to know that there is going to be support there for our small businesses, for our workers, for people who are unemployed, and for our families. They need to know that we are committed to seeing that we have the vaccines in place, the therapeutics in place that will enable us to fight and win this battle against the coronavirus. That is what we ought to be focused on, not this crazy wish list of things that the House, in a short amount of time—24 hours—came in here to vote on and, as I said earlier, much of which was focused on an agenda—a more permanent agenda—rather than the task at hand, which is addressing the crisis in front of us.

I hope my Democratic colleagues will work with us in a constructive way and in a bipartisan way to deal with the very real challenges that are being faced by the American people and not continue to come down here and advocate for an ideological wish list that, one, can't become law, and two, doesn't deal with the task at hand.

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 legislative 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 Anna M. Manasco, of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Joni Ernst, John Barrasso, Deb Fischer, John Cornyn, Roger F. Wicker, Roy Blunt, John Thune, Rob Portman, Shelley Moore Capito, Steve Daines, Lindsey Graham, Pat Roberts, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Richard Burr, Mike Crapo.

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 Anna M. Manasco, of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 72, nays 20, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 97 Ex.]

#### YEAS—72

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

#### NAYS—20

Bennet	Coons	Hirono
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Klobuchar
Booker	Harris	Menendez
Cantwell	Heinrich	Merkley



Murray  
Schatz  
Schumer

Stabenow  
Udall  
Van Hollen

Warren  
Wyden

# NOT VOTING—8

Alexander  
Brown  
Burr

Markey  
Murkowski  
Rounds

Sanders  
Whitehouse

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 72, the nays 20.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

## HOLDING FOREIGN COMPANIES ACCOUNTABLE ACT

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I would like to talk for a few minutes about China.

China, as you know, is a wonderful country. It has about 1.4, 1.5 billion people. A lot of times, you see reported that there are only 1.2 billion, but they are a lot bigger than that. America only has about 320, 330 million folks. By land size, it is about the same size as the United States. A lot of people think they are the biggest country by land in the world, but actually Russia is. Canada is No. 2, and China is probably No. 3 by land size, but we are both close.

I love visiting China. The few times I have been there, the people of China were just wonderful people—very interesting, very smart, very hard-working, very aspirational. I say this because when I talk today about China, I want you and my colleagues in the Senate to understand that I am not talking about the people of China. The people of China are good people; the Chinese Communist Party, not so much.

I really regret having to say this. I would not turn my back on the Chinese Communist Party if they were 2 days dead. I don't want to have a Cold War with China. I would rather see us work together for the common good of the planet Earth, and we have tried, but that hasn't worked out real well.

We admitted China to the World Trade Organization on December 11, 2001. It wasn't just our decision, but you know better than I do that China wouldn't have been admitted to the WTO without our support. So we agreed—December 11, 2001. China started cheating December 12. They steal our intellectual property—not just ours but everyone else's in the world. They steal the world's intellectual property. They substantially subsidize their state-owned companies, so other companies throughout the world that don't get state subsidies can't compete with them. For years, they manipulated their currency. They are trying to control the sea lanes of the world. They started in the South China Sea. They are seizing islands that don't belong to them. The next step is, they will try to militarize space. They have used their economic power as a weapon.

Our friends and allies in Australia have asked some very reasonable questions about the origins of the

coronavirus and the COVID-19. China has responded by saying: We refuse to buy any more of your products. Those are just the facts.

Now, the managerial elites told us—by that, I mean a lot of the entrenched politicians, the deep thinkers of the world, the academics, many members of the media, the bureaucrats, a lot of the corporate phonies, the ones who think they are smarter, more virtuous than the rest of us in America. They told us: Oh, you are wrong about China. Be patient with China. Be patient with them. Free enterprise will change China.

China has changed free enterprise, and China is on a glidepath to dominance. And do you know what the Congress has done about it? Nothing. Zero. Zilch. Nada.

Let me say it again. I love the people of China. I am talking about the Chinese Communist Party. And I do not—I do not want to get into a new Cold War. All I want and I think all the rest of us want is for China to play by the rules.

Let me give an example. Every company in the world that goes public would like to list on U.S. stock exchanges—the over-the-counter market, the S&P, the New York Stock Exchange. We are very efficient. We are excruciatingly transparent. We like investors throughout the world to know what they are buying. We require companies to disclose. And I think our SEC does an extraordinarily able job. I think Chairman Jay Clayton has just been a rock star.

We have a rule that if you list on our exchanges, you have to file periodic reports. Once again, we want investors to understand what they are investing in. And those reports have to be accurate, or you get in a lot of trouble. One of the things, for example, in one of these reports that companies have to file is an annual audit, but we take it a step further in the United States. There is a Board within the SEC called the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, PCAOB. Really, all that Board does—I say “all”; it is important—that Board inspects the audits that the companies file, not because they think the companies are cheating, although some do. But it is like when we play poker with friends. I play poker with friends. They are my friends, but I cut the cards every single time. And that is what our SEC does through this Board. They say: We are going to double check your audits. Everybody has to comply with that rule—American companies, British companies, Malaysian companies, Turkmenistan companies—except one: Chinese companies. They just say: No. They just say: No, we are not going to do it. And you know what we do about it? Nothing. Zero. Zilch. Nada.

This is not a 2- or 3-month phenomenon. This has gone on for years and years and years, and all of us in the executive branch and, yes, in Congress, we huff and we puff and we strut around and we hold hearings and we

issue press releases, and then we do nothing. And where I come from, what you allow is what will continue.

I have a bill. It is very simple. It says to all the companies out there in the world, including but not limited to China: If you want to list on an American exchange, you have to submit an audit. SEC has the right to look at that audit and audit the audit, and if you refuse not once, not twice, but three times—if over a 3-year period, each of those 3 years, the company says “You cannot audit my audit,” then they can no longer be listed on the American exchanges. It is very, very simple.

Once again, I tried to be very fair in this bill, as did my coauthor, Senator CHRIS VAN HOLLEN. We spent a lot of time on this. We don't want to be unfair to Chinese companies. We are not changing the rules; they have just been ignoring the rules. We are saying: Look, we are not going to give you just one chance; we are going to give you three chances.

If a Chinese company or any other company ignores the SEC request, what they can do to all the other companies in the world—that is, audit their audits—if you ignore the SEC for 3 years, then you have to take your business somewhere else.

Do you know whom that is going to help the most? The investors of America and the investors of the world.

Most of the companies that are public companies I believe tell the truth, but some of them don't, and this is hard-earned money that people are investing.

The name of our bill—Senator CHRIS VAN HOLLEN is the coauthor—is the Holding Foreign Companies Accountable Act, and, as I just explained, it is very simple.

Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 945 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 945) to amend the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to require certain issuers to disclose to the Securities and Exchange Commission information regarding foreign jurisdictions that prevent the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board from performing inspections under that Act, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Kennedy substitute amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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