

paying, meaningful jobs that can support the social fabric that is the foundation of our democracy.

There is much to do in the months and the years ahead. I just hope that the loss of Mr. Floyd will serve as a fresh beginning, an opportunity for a new start, for Americans from every corner of this country, from every political background, from every race and ethnicity, to stand together and to say: We commit ourselves anew to this Constitution that we love, to this Nation that we call home, and we are determined now more than ever to seek and to build a more perfect union.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

REMEMBERING GEORGE FLOYD

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, ours is a nation with a split screen of a battle on two fronts. One is the pandemic that we have been fighting now for many months, and the other is to continue the fight to defeat racial injustice that has sadly divided our Nation since its very inception.

One week ago today, George Floyd, a native Houstonian, tragically died in the custody of a law enforcement officer. As the gut-wrenching video of his death has spread, so has the passion and the anger among all of us who wonder, how can something like that happen?

Our Constitution guarantees every American the right to protest injustice, and I believe we all have a responsibility to stand up for what is right and condemn what is plainly wrong.

People of all colors, backgrounds, and ages are demanding that justice be served in the case of George Floyd. The first step in that process came on Friday when the officer who had him in custody was himself arrested and charged with third-degree murder.

Devastating events like the death of George Floyd remind us that we have a long way to go in the fight for equal justice under the law, but we cannot yield to the temptation to fill the void created by this tragedy with violence.

Too many protests across our country have turned into riots with looting and vandalism and destruction, hurting innocent people and tearing our cities apart. In response to these escalating protests last night, there were more curfews in place than at any other time since the assassination of Martin Luther King.

One man who experienced that period of American history firsthand is our colleague on the other side of the Capitol, Congressman JOHN LEWIS. He fought and marched alongside Dr. King, fighting for equal rights, and continues fighting today for equal justice.

Over the weekend, he denounced the rioting and looting that occurred and said:

"Be constructive, not destructive. History has proven time and time again that non-

violent, peaceful protest is the way to achieve the justice and equality that we all deserve."

I understand and share the passion and the anger that have spread across the country and support those who are peacefully protesting and demanding that justice be served. There should never be a time in which the color of someone's skin determines whether they live or die, and we have to do everything in our power to prevent these tragedies from occurring in the first place. But that change can't happen when businesses are being looted, when vehicles are being set on fire, or when innocent people are being harmed. It only can happen when we come together and learn to empathize with one another and understand the struggles our neighbors are facing.

I would note that there is good evidence that many of these acts of violence are being instigated not by victims of injustice but by outsiders determined to stoke the rage that many feel and thus incite them to that violence.

I was glad to hear the Attorney General of the United States say on Sunday that the Department of Justice will treat violence by individuals associated with Antifa and other groups as domestic terrorism and calling some of these protests following George Floyd's death to have been hijacked for another destructive, antisocial agenda.

Investigators are also tracking social media posts and looking into whether foreign agents are behind an active propaganda campaign using social media, trying to divide us further, to stoke the anger and rage that many of us feel. Officials have seen a huge surge in social media accounts with fewer than 200 followers created in the last month—a textbook sign of a disinformation campaign by a foreign power, much as we saw in 2016 during the Russian active measures campaign leading up to the election.

Righteous rage is one thing; being manipulated by instigators of violence and foreign powers is quite another.

PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, on to another matter, I was glad to be able to get back home to Texas this last week, where our communities are slowly coming out of a coronavirus shutdown. Churches have begun safely welcoming worshippers, restaurants are beginning to safely seat customers, albeit with the appropriate social distancing, and retailers are now beginning to safely reopen their doors. After weeks and in some cases months of hunkering down, it is a welcome sign of our progress in the fight against the coronavirus and the first step in our economic recovery.

When stay-at-home orders were first put in place, small business were worried—understandably so—about their ability to survive. Many said they couldn't survive more than a couple of weeks under those circumstances.

Back in March, Fort Worth chef Tim Love described the situation as "Armageddon." He said:

"It's worse than a tornado, it's worse than a hurricane, it's worse than a fire. This is going to destroy everything that I have built."

But the restaurants weren't alone; I heard similar concerns from countless other small business owners across nearly every sector of the economy—hospitality, tourism, retail, manufacturing, and the list goes on.

Keeping our small businesses open means much more than having another restaurant to eat in or a shop to buy from on Main Street; it is one of the most effective ways to support our economy, by protecting those jobs. Across the country, small businesses have employed nearly half of all U.S. workers. They are the lifeblood of our local economies and provide critical services to each of our communities.

Without customers coming through the front doors each day, it is hard to cover your business expenses and keep employees on the payroll. In fact, it is not just hard, it is impossible.

Whether you are a new business just starting out or a decades-old community staple, the financial squeeze caused by this virus and the mitigation efforts that ensued are unavoidable.

As we worked on coronavirus response legislation here in March, we knew that small businesses needed our support. That is why we established the Paycheck Protection Program and initially funded it with \$350 billion. This funded loans that were available for these businesses to keep their employees on their payrolls and cover other necessary expenses, and if they did so, that loan would turn into a grant.

It was so popular—and it's not hard to see why—and the need was so great that that initial funding ran out in about 2 weeks, so we wisely, in my opinion, decided to replenish it with another \$320 billion.

An IT and document management company in Sugar Land, TX, called Function 4 was one of the recipients of one of those PPP loans. One of the partners, Bill Patsouras, said that if it wasn't for the PPP, they would "absolutely have to start letting people go." But instead of layoffs, all 89 employees of Function 4 are still employed and still working.

This is a familiar story, I am sure, not just in Texas but elsewhere. As of May 23, small businesses in Texas have received more than 350,000 PPP loans totaling more than \$40 billion. That is an average loan size of less than \$115,000. These are for small and medium-size businesses.

In speaking to my community bankers last week, I learned that one bank had approved a loan request for as little as \$300. So while the average loan was \$115,000, some businesses needed far less than that, including this one loan for \$300.

No matter how large or small, these loans have allowed businesses, churches, nonprofits, and some of our most