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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

God of grace and mercy, in these divisive and polarized times, remind us that words have consequences. Help us to remember that we are accountable to You for every idle and careless word we speak.

Lord, teach our Senators to be obedient to Your commands, doing Your will as Your presence fills them with joy.

Today, surround our lawmakers with the shield of Your favor as they labor to keep our Nation strong. May they be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger. Manifest Your power through their labors so that this Nation will be exalted by righteousness.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

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

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

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, in June of last year, I held an Oversight Committee hearing about foreign threats to taxpayer-funded research. My goal is to ensure that government

is doing its job to detect and deter these threats.

Since COVID, America's greatest minds have been working hard to develop a vaccine. Their research will impact the health of Americans and the world.

According to the FBI, China has targeted our COVID research to potentially steal our work product. Our government and private sector must guard and fight back against these malicious attacks by the Chinese Communist Government. The health of our people and the world depend on it.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING TYLER GERTH

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, first, my hometown of Louisville, KY, is mourning a young man who was shot and killed on Saturday at a protest in Jefferson Square Park.

Tyler Gerth was just 27 years old. He was a graduate of Trinity High School and the University of Kentucky. He was an up-and-coming photojournalist with a lot of talent.

He had been attending demonstrations, both to speak up for Breonna Taylor as well as to document history. Instead, he lost his life.

The investigation is still proceeding, but it appears the suspect in custody had been a frequent participant in these protests. He had already been arrested once. It seems he had gotten into some dispute and fired indiscriminately—the definition of “senseless violence.”

My sympathies and the sympathies of all Kentuckians go out to the Gerth family.

We are 30 days into these protests. Kentuckians and all Americans deserve

safe streets, safe communities, and peace.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, each time I have returned home over the last several weeks, I have had the opportunity to travel to different Kentucky hospitals to safely meet with healthcare professionals and thank them for their incredible work, as well as to listen to what is on their minds.

For more than 3 months now, our Nation's doctors, nurses, and health professionals have been fighting day and night to heal strangers and protect our Nation. I said in mid-March that our country was about to meet a lot of new heroes and that among them would be many people who wear scrubs, who rush toward the sick, and who wash their hands until they bleed.

Well, Americans and families from coast to coast have met just such heroes. The frontline professionals I am meeting are proud to do their work, and you had better believe they are appreciative that the sacrifices and smart precautions taken by the American people stopped health systems from being overrun in the springtime, allowed them to continue giving each patient the care they deserved, and bought our country time to plan a smart, safe, and gradual reopening.

So until we have a safe and effective vaccine, it will remain all of our jobs as American citizens to help our Nation settle into a middle ground between unsustainable emergency lockdowns and our ordinary life from before all this. In short, we cannot go back to April, and we cannot go right back to normal. We need new routines, new rhythms, and new strategies for this new middle ground in between.

It is the task of each family, each small business, each employer, and all levels of government to apply common sense and make this happen. To name

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



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just one example, we must have no stigma—none—about wearing a mask when we leave our homes and come near other people. Wearing simple face coverings is not about protecting ourselves; it is about protecting everyone we encounter.

In fact, the more we hate the pain and suffering that accompanied the strict stay-home guidelines a few months ago, the happier we should be to take responsible, small steps every day to ensure our country can stay on offense against the virus.

Now, the Senate should take pride in the degree to which our historic response has helped the country get where we are. All of the health leaders and professionals I meet continue to be glad for the CARES Act, the historic bipartisan legislation that Senate Republicans wrote and then negotiated across the aisle.

We sent historic resources to hospitals and health providers to help them do their healing work and to fight this new invader. That was in addition to the historic relief we provided to households and small businesses, which economists across the political spectrum say saved millions of jobs and prevented an economic freefall.

In May and June, while the Democrat-led House has been mostly absent, the Senate has kept right on leading. In addition to legislating on other important subjects, we have continued to work all angles of the pandemic.

By the end of this week, I believe our committees will have held more than 40 hearings on key aspects of the crisis so this institution can continue to learn and inform any future work.

As I have been saying for weeks, a number of us are putting together strong legal protections for healthcare professionals, K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and employers so that our recovery is not promptly swamped by a second epidemic of frivolous lawsuits.

While the Democratic House slapped together an absurd multitrillion-dollar wish list that even the mainstream media panned immediately, the Senate has continued with our substantive, serious, facts-first approach. That is the winning formula that built the historically successful CARES Act, and that is the formula we will replicate in any future recovery legislation down the road.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on a completely different matter, on Thursday I noted that in recent weeks the Air Force has scrambled jets to intercept intrusions by Russian military aircraft near U.S. airspace in Alaska.

Well, on Saturday it happened again. According to the Defense Department, Russian reconnaissance planes entered the Alaska Air Defense Identification Zone and lingered for 8 hours. Obvi-

ously, this is just the latest in a series of escalations from Putin's regime.

Meanwhile, China has resumed its submarine intrusions into Japanese contiguous zones and picked deadly fights with India at high altitude.

North Korea State media has stepped up its unhinged, anti-American rhetoric, reportedly declaring over the weekend that nuclear war was "the only option left."

And Iran has issued a warrant for the arrest of the President of the United States because we took the mullahs' top terrorist off the battlefield back in January.

Our adversaries are as intent as ever on undermining peace; disrupting commerce; and threatening American citizens, our interests, and our allies wherever and whenever possible.

So this year's National Defense Authorization Act is as urgent and important as it has been for 60 consecutive years. Thanks to Chairman INHOFE and Ranking Member REED, the legislation we will consider is already the product of exhaustive bipartisan effort.

It includes 229 bipartisan amendments adopted by our colleagues on the Armed Services Committee. It may include more amendments before we finish with it here on the floor.

But the primary missions of the legislation are already clear. On the homefront, it will increase pay for servicemembers; reform the military housing and healthcare systems; and increase transparency in Pentagon budgeting, hiring, and acquisition.

Around the world, it will make clear our commitments to our allies in Europe and the Pacific, invest in key technologies from biotechnology to hypersonics, and make sure that our men and women in uniform have the tools to remain the greatest fighting force in world history.

I am grateful to our committee colleagues for giving the Senate the opportunity to set strong priorities for our national defense. Our job now is to follow their example, work together in a bipartisan way, and pass the NDAA on behalf of our men and women in uniform and the Nation they protect.

EMERGENCY AID FOR RETURNING AMERICANS AFFECTED BY CORONAVIRUS ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 4091.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4091) to amend section 1113 of the Social Security Act to provide authority for fiscal year 2020 for increased payments for temporary assistance to United States citizens returned from foreign countries, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time.

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

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate on the bill, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 4091) was passed, as follows:

S. 4091

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Emergency Aid for Returning Americans Affected by Coronavirus Act".

SEC. 2. INCREASE IN AGGREGATE PAYMENTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1113(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1313(d)) is amended by striking "fiscal years 2017 and 2018" and all that follows through the period and inserting "fiscal year 2020, the total amount of such assistance provided during such fiscal year shall not exceed \$10,000,000."

(b) EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amounts provided by the amendment made by this section are designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

(2) DESIGNATION IN SENATE.—In the Senate, this section and the amendment made by this section are designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4112(a) of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018.

SEC. 3. LIMIT ON DIRECT CONTACT WITH REPA- TRIATED INDIVIDUALS DURING COVID-19 EMERGENCY PERIOD.

During the emergency period described in section 1135(g)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b-5(g)(1)(B)), in providing temporary assistance under section 1113 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1313), no employee of the Administration for Children and Families of the Department of Health and Human Services shall have direct, in-person contact with an individual specified in section 1113(a)(1) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1313(a)(1)), except in the case of a uniformed member of the Regular Corps or the Ready Reserve Corps of the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service (as described in section 203 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 204)) in an active duty status who, as determined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, has—

(1) received appropriate training on infection prevention and control; and

(2) access to appropriate personal protective equipment.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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