

Mr. McCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### ABORTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, this morning, the Supreme Court struck down a Louisiana law that would have restricted abortion providers so severely that Louisiana would have been left with only a single clinic. These types of laws have popped up in State after State as a backdoor means of banning abortions—if not in law then in practice—an insidious campaign to undermine the rights of women to make their own medical decisions.

Today's ruling is a thunderbolt of justice for millions of American women who were at risk of having their constitutional rights invalidated by a reactionary State legislature, as there are many throughout the country.

After surprising but very welcome rulings on DACA and LGBTQ rights 2 weeks ago, the Supreme Court has once again made the right decision. The Supreme Court is entering Buffalo Springfield, territory: "There's something happening here."

Truthfully, today's ruling should not have been a surprise. The Louisiana law violated the Court's precedent. In 2016, the Court struck down a Texas law that was virtually identical to the one in Louisiana. The newest addition to the Supreme Court, however, despite promising the Senate that he would respect precedent, dissented from the majority's ruling today. Justice Kavanaugh told Senators he believed *Roe v. Wade* to be settled law, but in the very first ruling on a related issue, he decided that the Court's precedent was wrong, and *Roe v. Wade* could be greatly undermined.

Thankfully, Kavanaugh's view was not in the majority. Today, America can breathe a sigh of relief that the Supreme Court kept the floodgates firmly shut against this particular attempt to nullify the landmark decision of *Roe v. Wade*.

#### RUSSIA

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on Russia, on Friday, the New York Times and other media outlets reported that a Russian intelligence unit was offering Taliban-linked fighters bounties to kill American and coal-

ition troops in Afghanistan. It should go without saying that it is our solemn obligation to support and protect our troops. If Russian intelligence is conducting a shadow campaign to sponsor the murder of American troops, there must be swift, strong, and unmistakable consequences for Putin and his cronies—something we should do in this NDAA bill.

The New York Times reported that the Trump administration was aware of these activities as early as March of this year. Yet, the Trump administration has authorized no—no retaliatory actions. Russia gives bounties to kill Americans; the administration does nothing.

Donald Trump, you are not being a very strong President here, as usual.

At the very least, you would expect the President and his team would want to get to the bottom of this. The President claimed, however, that "nobody briefed or told [him] me about this report."

President Trump, you lose either way. If you weren't briefed on this important report, how can you run an administration where something this important is not brought to your level? And if you were told about the report and did nothing, that is even worse. Shame on you. Shame on you.

A few hours ago, the White House Press Secretary said the President still has not received a briefing from the intelligence community about these reports. The White House Chief of Staff, meanwhile, is reportedly briefing Republican Members of the House before the President of the United States gets a briefing.

Is that amazing? He is the Commander in Chief. He is the one who is supposed to be protecting our soldiers, and they are still twiddling their thumbs instead of giving him a briefing, which, who knows, given his lack of respect for the truth, he may have received it already and just denied it.

It raises many, many questions. First, is it true the President was not told this information? If so, why not? Was there a concern about sharing this information with the President? And the President doesn't seem as outraged as you would think he would be if, in fact, the intelligence community had this vital and important information and had not briefed him.

Something—something doesn't smell right here, especially when we have a President and an administration who has a great deal of trouble telling the truth. We need answers, and we need them fast. I am calling for the Directors of National Intelligence and the CIA to immediately brief all 100 Senators on reports that Russia placed bounties on U.S. troops in Afghanistan. Among many other things, we need to know whether President Trump was told this information and, if so, when.

Because there has been an alarming pattern in this administration, dating back to its first days of appeasement toward authoritarian leaders, espe-

cially of Vladimir Putin, President Trump stood next to Putin on the international stage and accepted his word over the word of our own intelligence agencies. President Trump has delayed or ignored congressionally mandated sanctions on Putin. The President has pondered withdrawing from NATO—the organization whose very purpose is to defend the free world from Vladimir Putin. Only a few months ago, the President mused about inviting Russia back into the G7.

If we had learned anything in the past 3 years, it is that President Trump is inclined to ignore or forgive Vladimir Putin's abuses on the international stage—even in the face of an attack on our democracy. If we learned anything in the last 3 years, it is that dictators—whether Xi or Putin or the head of North Korea—played President Trump for a fool and got the advantage of him every time.

This means we all need to speak up right now and make sure that Congress and the executive branch are doing what is necessary to get to the bottom of these reports. The first step is a briefing for all 100 U.S. Senators.

Despite what some administration officials are claiming, no such briefing has been scheduled, and I am not aware of any Senator who has been invited to a White House briefing of any sort.

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, on COVID-19, unfortunately, COVID-19 continues to surge in several States. Florida, Texas, and Arizona are reporting new highs in case numbers. Last Friday, there were 45,000 new cases nationwide—the most in a single day.

As the public health crisis continues, our country is facing one of the greatest economic challenges since the Great Depression. Over one-fifth of the workforce has requested unemployment assistance. State and local Tribal governments are on life support and have laid off over 1.6 million workers. Our perennially underfunded schools are fighting an uphill battle to prepare for the fall.

As Americans struggle to make rent payments and face potential evictions, as our healthcare and childcare systems face unprecedented burdens, Senate Republicans have been missing in action. Senate Republicans equal MIA.

Over a month ago, Leader McCONNELL said that Senate the Republicans "have yet to feel the urgency of acting immediately." It seems like he really meant it. It has been nearly 3 months since we passed the CARES Act on a bipartisan basis, 96 to 0, and over 45 days since the House passed the Heroes Act—legislation that would deliver sorely needed resources to States, essential workers, American families, and our healthcare system, but Leader McCONNELL continues to say that Republicans "need to assess the conditions in the country" and insists that

any future emergency relief bill will be written in his office.

Assess the conditions of the country when we have more unemployment than any time since the Great Depression? When a pandemic is killing tens of thousands of Americans monthly, ignore that and assess the conditions? And then for Leader McConnell to say the bill will be written in his office, has he learned any lessons on COVID 2, COVID 3, COVID 3.5, the Justice in Policing Act? When you try to do something major on a partisan basis, nothing happens, and America desperately needs something to happen.

Leader McConnell knows he has to negotiate if he wants to pass legislation. He has been around here a long time. He knows that. His refusal to engage in bipartisan talks on policing reform shows that maybe our Republican friends are not interested in passing bipartisan legislation, but that is what needs to happen—bipartisan negotiations on policing reform and bipartisan negotiations on COVID.

This morning, Speaker Pelosi and I sent a letter to Leader McConnell urging him to join Democrats at the negotiating table for the next round of COVID-19 relief legislation.

We are on the precipice of several deadlines: For millions upon millions of Americans, another rent payment is due this week. States are planning their budgets right now before the new fiscal year on July 1. The emergency boost in unemployment will run out by the end of next month.

This week, Senate Democrats will force action on the floor on some of the most urgently needed measures to help working Americans, starting this evening, when Democrats will ask consent to pass crucial Federal support for State, local, and Tribal governments.

I will have more to say about this issue this evening, but I do want my Republican colleagues to hear the words of State and local officials across the country.

Today, the Big 7 national associations representing Governors, mayors, State legislatures, counties, and city managers—all bipartisan groups, with many Republican Members coming from the deepest red States to the darkest blue—wrote the Senate a letter pleading—pleading for Federal support and warning of dire consequences of delay. These are the seven organizations representing Governors and legislatures and counties and towns and cities.

Here is what they write:

Previous federal bills responding to COVID-19 provided important support . . . yet none allow for the replacement of billions of lost revenue due to COVID-19. More robust and direct stimulus is needed for State and local governments to both rebuild the economy and maintain essential services in education, health care, emergency operations, public safety and more.

Months have gone by and our communities continue to suffer. Americans have a history of standing together in times of crisis and must do so now.

Republican colleagues, please listen to those words. Leader McConnell, please listen. These are your own States that are included here. They are demanding relief. To say we still don't see an urgent need, to say maybe we will get around to it in a month, to say the legislation will be written in McConnell's office—all setting up for failure and the desperately needed lack of relief that America needs.

I yield the floor.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021—Motion to Proceed—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 4049, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S. 4049, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the floor as we start further consideration of the National Defense Authorization Act and ask my colleagues to pay close attention to what is included in this legislation. No one is going to be surprised that the National Defense Authorization Act might include something that had not gotten the bright light of day shown on it, but I am here to say to my colleagues, what is in this act is really egregious, and we need to correct it before we continue to move forward.

This legislation—mostly done behind closed doors—is not unusual for the Senate Armed Services Committee, but when you think about the billions of dollars that we are spending, we need to make sure this policy out here on the Senate floor is not just another rubberstamp.

We are here to look at particular provisions that I think are troubling, particularly because it wrestles away civilian control of our nuclear arsenal and gives it to the military—provisions that, in the future, would allow the Defense Department to raid dollars used by the Department of Energy for cleanup of nuclear waste, R&D for our National Laboratories, or maybe other infrastructure investment.

I am aware that the Presiding Officer knows how much the quadrennial review called for in investment in energy infrastructure. So I find it troubling

today to see that we are at a provision that would wrestle away control of our nuclear arsenal and give it to the military. These provisions are dangerous because, one, they would strip from the Secretary of Energy the power over his own budget by requiring that he agree to a sub-Cabinet member group of the Nuclear Weapons Council to approve the National Nuclear Security Administration's budget.

That is right. That is why the current Energy Secretary and past Energy Secretaries oppose this language. They oppose it because it basically tells the Energy Secretary what the majority or a big chunk of his budget will be, and it would allow DOD, then, to prioritize things within the Energy budget as they saw fit for making nuclear weapons instead of focusing on our Federal priorities of nuclear waste cleanup, R&D that we want to see in our National Labs, or other issues that we want to see an investment in that Energy is already doing.

I just can't even believe that this shift in control away from the Secretary of Energy into this sub-Cabinet so that the nuclear weapons complex would be moving away from civilians to the military is actually in this legislation. I do not believe the Nuclear Weapons Council understands the Department of Energy's priorities. How could they? Do they sit in on any of the meetings for the National Labs or the waste cleanup?

I do believe the DOD and the Nuclear Weapons Council know there is a long history of raiding the nuclear waste cleanup budget, and other administrations have tried this. These same individuals tried this in 2018, only to be shot down by our colleagues in the House of Representatives. The NNSA, or the National Nuclear Security Agency, was created in 2000 to be part of the Department of Energy, to manage both the nuclear weapons complex and the nonproliferation activities. Congress made them a part of the Department of Energy, not a part of the Department of Defense. We did that because we wanted to maintain a longstanding civilian control over the country's nuclear weapons. Giving the DOD now control over the Nuclear Weapons Council and their complete power over this budget gives control of our nuclear weapons to the military.

I can't believe that we are here with all the things we have to deal with—a COVID-19 crisis, an economic crisis, justice reform—and now we have to worry about people, in the dark of night, changing control of our Energy budget and turning it over to the DOD and giving them control of our nuclear arsenal, to say nothing of the concerns I have for what they will do to short-change the Hanford cleanup budget, which is a challenge to the Nation. It is an obligation that needs to be met every year, and I guarantee you there are always people looking at the nuclear waste cleanup budget and thinking they can either do it on the cheap,