

these families are to keep things together, are we really going to walk away from them? I think it is time for Senator MCCONNELL to sit down with the Democratic leaders. There is no alternative to this.

Steve Mnuchin, the wandering messenger on Capitol Hill, can do his job—and I wish him well—but it is no replacement for grown-ups to sit at the same table, to sit down and work out a compromise. We did on March 26. We can do it again. We need to do it for these families.

I will tell you something else. When we get reports about the state of the economy—and I have heard numbers back and forth—that on an annualized basis it is contracting from 29 percent to 33 percent, that is a big amount. It is one out of three businesses. A third of the goods and services in this country—think about that—going away and disappearing. We have already seen evidence of that.

What do you do to put life back into an economy? Don't take my word for it. Listen to the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Jerome Powell. He said it again yesterday: We have to deal with this pandemic; that means more testing.

The Republican proposal that is floating here and has not been offered, is \$26 billion more in testing. We are at \$100 billion. I think we need at least \$100 billion. Why do we need it? So it is generally available, easily available to every person and family in America; so that it is affordable—and I hope that means free—and, most importantly, so that it is timely.

To people who say, well, I took a test, I ask: How long did it take to get the results on your COVID-19 test? They say: Oh, 6 days, 7 days. That is not a timely test that you can use to make a plan. It is a piece of medical data. It is a piece of history. If we are going to hope to open this economy in a responsible way, to get to contact tracing that really works, if we hope to open our schools so they are safe for the kids and the teachers and the administrators and everyone else, we need testing available, and we need a system of testing that is timely.

We have failed in addressing this pandemic. Why do I say that? It sounds like an outrageous political statement. Because the United States has 5 percent of the population in the world and 25 percent of the COVID infections. Twenty-five percent of the COVID infections in the world are in this country and 5 percent of the population. Other countries have handled this better. We know it. We should learn from them.

This President has to get away from the medical quackery which he spreads around on his Twitter account and in his speeches. He has to stop looking at these medical gurus, which he discovers in the weird corners of the internet, and peddling their goods for the rest of America. He has to show some guts and wear a mask more often

so people understand that even Trump Republicans need to take into consideration what they are doing to the people around them. That, to me, is the only way to get out of this mess and do it quickly. Otherwise, we are going to face this more.

We should have done better. By this time, we should have had an alternative to what the House did 10 weeks ago. We do not. By next week, we have to do it.

I will just say flat out that there is no point in considering going home at the end of next week unless we have solved this problem. There is no excuse.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator for South Dakota.

NEW MARKETS FOR STATE-INSPECTED MEAT AND POULTRY ACT

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I rise today to urge the Senate to include the New Markets for State-Inspected Meat and Poultry Act in a COVID-19 response legislation that we are considering during this work period.

This is legislation I have worked on with my colleague Senator ANGUS KING of Maine for several years, long before COVID-19 disrupted the safety and security of the American food supply. It has bipartisan support.

COVID-19 revealed the cracks in multiple industries—our food supply, pharmaceuticals, defense, and manufacturing in general. Every American pays the price for foreign reliance—every American. This is a moment in history when we can rebuild what “American made” and what “made America great” really means in the first place. That, of course, is American production and innovation across all industries.

As consumers of food—and that is everybody, Republican and Democrat alike, Independents included—we should demand that we have this production capacity in the United States. Heavy reliance on foreign production and manufacturing is a mistake, and America needs to see a renaissance of American production and ingenuity.

Just as an example, on July 29 of this year, it was announced that JBS, a Brazilian-owned company, intends to acquire the Mountain States Rosen lamb plant in Greeley, CO. It has been reported that JBS will grind hamburger and cut steaks, which, unfortunately, will eliminate the ability of this plant to process nearly 350,000 lambs within the United States. This is yet another example of a foreign company working to consolidate and to integrate the American food supply system to the detriment of U.S. ag producers. We just simply can't sit here and watch this occur on our watch. We are already paying the price of foreign ownership in our food supply system today.

The time is now to aggressively pursue American options for production and processing in order to protect American consumers and our entire economy.

Right now, we are actually giving an unfair and unnecessary advantage to the large, sometimes foreign-owned, meat processing facilities.

These large facilities typically pursue licensing through the USDA Federal meat inspection process, which gives them a certification allowing them to sell across all State lines. However, smaller processors that are trying to inject competition into a market which is dominated by primarily big players, typically pursue State-inspected certifications, which, unfortunately, today, do not allow them to sell meat across State lines. The irony is that the State processors that are out there also need to be federally approved to meet or exceed these Federal inspection standards. So our smaller meat processors are achieving a certification of equal or higher standards but are given a license with less ability to market their product. They have to stay within the boundaries of the State in which they are produced.

In my hometown of Fort Pierre, SD, a beef processing company was announced to be opening in May of this year, 2020. This is the kind of American production we want to see more of. But if this processor chooses to pursue a State-inspected meat license instead of a USDA license, they will not be able to sell across State lines, even though South Dakota's meat poultry inspection program has standards that meet or exceed Federal inspection standards. This is unacceptable and is harming our small American processors' ability to compete fairly.

This is why we should include the New Markets for State-Inspected Meat and Poultry Act in our next COVID-19 relief legislation.

In recent months, partially due to the toll the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our meat processing facilities, we have seen renewed support for this particular effort. In the Senate, we now have 12 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle. Additionally, there was companion legislation which was introduced in the House of Representatives by Representative LIZ CHENEY of Wyoming.

I would like to explain what our legislation does and why it is so important to include it as part of the Federal Government's response to COVID-19. The New Markets for State-Inspected Meat and Poultry Act would allow meat that has been inspected by a federally approved State meat and poultry inspection program to be sold across State lines.

Currently, cattle, sheep, and swine that are raised in South Dakota by some of the best producers in the world and inspected at a South Dakota processing facility are limited to markets within the State. Yet they meet or exceed Federal inspection standards. It just doesn't make sense, especially when there is high demand for locally sourced and processed proteins in a

State-approved facility, which, by Federal law has standards that meet or exceed Federal inspection standards.

Our legislation would allow these products, which pass State inspection standards, to be sold across State lines, opening up new markets for producers and giving consumers greater choice at the grocery store. At a time when our food supply is in danger, this is a very easy first step.

Like so many sectors of our economy, the food production industry was ill-prepared for the unprecedented changes that needed to be made when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Labor shortages and worker protection measures slowed down plants around the country, and outbreaks even caused some of the facilities to shut down entirely.

We saw this happen in my home State of South Dakota, where our Sioux Falls Smithfield plant processes 20,000 hogs a day and employs approximately 35 hard-working individuals. At the peak of the crisis, hog processing dropped approximately 40 percent in May, and beef production dropped approximately 35 percent in May, when compared to 2019 production levels across the United States. At one point, there was a backlog of nearly 1 million cattle ready to be processed.

Meanwhile, grocery stores across the country began to see meat shortages on their shelves because of the chokepoint found in the concentration of beef processing at the big four packers, where processing capacity had been curtailed. Livestock producers were faced with one of the worst scenarios they could face—having to euthanize their animals because they weren't able to get them into a processing facility. While we have been able to recover some of the production capacity since that time, it is far from being back to normal, and we are still unprepared to deal with the continuing pandemic.

While we work to get meat and pork processing facilities back up and running at capacity, we should also be utilizing State-based solutions to help offset the backlog and help provide additional capacity. Specifically, we should include the New Markets for State-Inspected Meat and Poultry Act in the next relief package.

Currently, 27 States operate State meat inspection programs. Meat and poultry inspected at these facilities are already sold for public consumption in the States where they are licensed.

Today, if you have meat or poultry processed at a South Dakota inspection facility in Hudson, SD, you wouldn't be able to sell it across the border just a few miles away in Iowa, but you could sell it a couple hundred miles away in Lemmon, SD.

It really doesn't make much sense, especially since State meat and poultry inspection facilities are required by law to be at least equal to federally inspected processing facilities with regard to their food safety standards.

These products are safe for consumption and should be allowed to be sold nationwide. This will help offset the pressure on federally inspected facilities during the ongoing pandemic and in the future as well.

This is a commonsense solution that has bipartisan, bicameral support. It is time to end this arbitrary regulation restricting the sale of these products to within State lines and allow facilities inspected by State meat inspection programs to increase production and sell their product nationwide.

Including the New Markets for State-Inspected Meat and Poultry Act in future COVID-19 relief legislation is good for producers and very good for consumers.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 10 minutes when the afternoon votes are concluded.

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

VOTE ON KAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Kan nomination?

Mr. ALEXANDER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 71, nays 21, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 152 Ex.]

YEAS—71

Alexander	Cornyn	Graham
Barrasso	Cortez Masto	Grassley
Blackburn	Cotton	Hassan
Blunt	Cramer	Hawley
Boozman	Crapo	Hoeben
Braun	Cruz	Hyde-Smith
Capito	Daines	Inhofe
Carper	Enzi	Johnson
Casey	Ernst	Jones
Cassidy	Feinstein	Kaine
Collins	Fischer	Kennedy
Coons	Gardner	King

Klobuchar	Portman	Shaheen
Lankford	Reed	Shelby
Leahy	Risch	Sinema
Lee	Roberts	Smith
Loeffler	Romney	Sullivan
Manchin	Rosen	Thune
McConnell	Rounds	Tillis
McSally	Rubio	Toomey
Murkowski	Sasse	Warner
Murphy	Schatz	Wicker
Paul	Scott (FL)	Young
Peters	Scott (SC)	

NAYS—21

Baldwin	Durbin	Sanders
Bennet	Gillibrand	Schumer
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Stabenow
Brown	Hirono	Udall
Cantwell	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cardin	Merkley	Warren
Duckworth	Murray	Wyden

NOT VOTING—8

Booker	Markey	Tester
Burr	Moran	Whitehouse
Harris	Perdue	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The majority leader.

HEALS ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on Monday, the Republicans introduced a trillion-dollar proposal to give American families more coronavirus relief. Most urgently, the Republicans want to continue a Federal supplement to State unemployment insurance, which is set to expire, as we all know, tomorrow.

If our Democratic colleagues had acted with the urgency that struggling people deserve, we could right now be finishing up a major bipartisan package for kids, jobs, and healthcare. If our Democratic colleagues had acted with urgency, unemployed Americans wouldn't be facing a total elimination of this extra help.

Instead, jobless Americans are staring down this cliff because Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader have refused to negotiate. They have refused to move 1 inch from the Speaker's far-left proposal that is so absurd and so unserious that their own moderate Democratic Members began trashing it the instant it came out. This is the multitrillion-dollar boondoggle that would tax and borrow in order to provide a massive tax cut to the rich people in blue States—the SALT giveaway; that would fund diversity studies of the legal pot industry; and that would do 1,000 other things with no relationship whatsoever to the crisis.

Just a few minutes ago, our colleague from Wisconsin tried to get consent to continue the unemployment assistance to prevent it from expiring tomorrow, and the Democratic leader objected unless he got to pass the entirety of the massive wish list. The Republicans want to continue this aid before it expires, but the Democratic leader says: Let them eat SALT.

This is what was written about their proposal: "Privately, several House Democrats concede [the bill] feels like