

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 legislative clerk read the nomination of Mark Wesley Menezes, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Energy.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic Leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I just heard the Republican leader speak out on the floor. Leader MCCONNELL is busy giving partisan speeches while for the last 2½ hours Speaker PELOSI, myself, Secretary of Treasury Mnuchin, and Chief of Staff Meadows were sitting in a room working hard, trying to narrow our differences and come to an agreement. We all want to come to an agreement. We know the gravity of the situation demands it. We will continue to work and work at it.

We had a productive meeting. We narrowed some differences. Frankly, there are many that remain, but we must not give up. We must not resort to stark partisanship. We must come together and find a solution.

If I had to characterize the major difference between our side and the Republican side, we believe the gravity of the situation—the economic problems, the health problems—demands a bold, strong, vigorous solution by the Federal Government. We believe we must meet those needs. And it will cost money, but mark my words—if we spend less money now, it will cost us more money later.

We hear from our schools. They very much want to reopen. We hear from the parents of children. They very much want their kids to go back to school, but they want to do it safely. It costs a lot of dollars to make a school safe in this COVID crisis—not only the money for masks and PPE, but you can't sit two kids next to each other on a bus, so there have to be many more bus routes. Because some of the learning will be distant, you need hotspots, and a lot of the kids don't have them in their homes. You may need new ventilating systems because COVID demands it for a healthy classroom. You may need to convert gymnasiums and cafeterias into new classrooms. Teachers may have to teach longer, and we may even

need more teachers. These are very important things we need to do to open schools safely, but they demand more dollars. As we sat in a room today, we discussed our views as to how many dollars are needed.

The same thing with food safety—we Democrats believe that during this crisis, children and adults should not go hungry, and we proposed money to ensure that there are SNAP benefit increases to help people to feed themselves, that there is enough money to feed the kids who used to get school breakfasts and lunches, and that there is enough money at food banks and other places so they can feed their families. That costs money. The Senate Republican proposal here proposed a tax break for a three-martini lunch and a \$20 billion slush fund for big agribusiness but no money for these kids who need to be fed. That is a significant difference. There are many. There are many.

We Democrats believe strongly that we have to have free and fair elections and that the mail must be delivered in a timely way because so many more people are going to vote by mail. So many polling places need to be set up because, with COVID, you can't be close together.

There is a long list of things that are needed. The good news is, our Republican colleagues agree with a few of them, but some they don't agree with, and we are discussing why we think they need them, and they will counter with us in the room—Mnuchin and Meadows. But the discussion is necessary, the discussion is productive, and we will continue it.

Again, the anomaly of the Republican leader making a partisan speech on the floor while we—Speaker PELOSI, myself, Mnuchin, and Meadows—are trying to negotiate and move forward is really a contrast that I think most people see.

So let's keep moving forward. There is a real crisis here. There are people who are unemployed, and they don't deserve a pay cut as they go forward. There are small businesses that need help desperately. There are schools that have to open. There are State and local governments that must have funding. This is not an abstract concept; these are firefighters, our teachers, our healthcare workers, our bus-drivers and sanitation men and women. If the State and local governments don't get money, they are going to be laid off, and services will be much worse.

Again, we have a wide disparity on what kind of dollars and how to deal with treatment. It is our belief that this administration's program on treatment has been a failure, that we don't have enough treatment, and that we have to redouble our efforts to put more money into treatment.

These discussions are continuing because we hope we can reach an agreement. We will keep at it and at it and at it because the Nation demands a so-

lution—a bold, comprehensive solution that will slay this awful virus and its consequences once and for all.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF EL PASO SHOOTING

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, 1 year ago, a gunman stormed into an El Paso Walmart and opened fire. There were 46 people shot; 23, tragically, died; and the devastation in this tight-knit community was beyond imagination. The heartbreak and confusion quickly turned to rage when we learned that this out-of-town shooter was a white supremacist whose crime could only be described as domestic terrorism.

As my good friend El Paso Mayor Dee Margo has said many times over the last year, we will not let this evil define us. He wrote in an op-ed this weekend: "El Paso will not be known for tragedy but for our strength and grace in the midst of tragedy."

That strength comes to mind when I reflect on this terrible anniversary. When I visited El Paso the day after the shooting, I saw the makeshift memorial that was created to honor those who died. On that first day, the collection of photos, flowers, and mementos was relatively small—maybe just a few feet wide—but by the time I came back 3 days later, it had grown to over half a mile. This massive memorial, the long line of folks waiting to donate blood, the generous donations made to support the victims and their families, these were the real reminders of the power and resilience of the El Paso community.

As we remember this anniversary amidst a pandemic, there will not be groups of strangers hugging, crying, or holding hands like I witnessed in the days following the shooting. Instead, we will have socially distanced memorials, like the vigil held yesterday, that will allow El Pasoans once again to prove that hate will not win.

Together, we will remember the 23 lives which were lost 1 year ago, as well as those who were wounded, and we stand in solidarity with El Paso, a border community that has looked hate in the eye and unequivocally chosen strength, grace, and love for one another.

CORONAVIRUS

Madam President, with August here and the start of school just around the corner, school districts, colleges, and universities in Texas and Iowa and everywhere else are in the process of making very difficult decisions about how to begin the school year. The teachers, the professors, the faculty, and the administration of these schools