

large communities. This is a large number of positions. Five of these are public works positions, without which, how is the plowing going to be done this winter to keep the roads safe and clear?

The town has also postponed \$1.6 million in capital projects. That has a ripple effect on the local economy. It means the contractor is neither buying supplies nor hiring employees at this time.

In northern Maine, in the northern Maine city of Madawaska, the town manager has shared with my office that the town has had to scrap a \$3 million road-paving project and will have to keep at least three positions vacant.

This is what they are doing already. It is only going to get worse for these towns and cities as revenues continue to plummet.

Senator MENENDEZ made a very important point that I want to reiterate, and that is, the way our bill is structured, every city, every town, regardless of size, will receive direct assistance. Every county will receive direct assistance. They will not be dependent on the largesse of the State. The money will go to them to meet these essential needs.

It is common sense to provide the relief needed to avoid these widespread layoffs and cuts to essential services at the local level, where they often are most often needed. These are the public servants who keep our communities and our citizens safe. They are the public servants who keep our communities and our citizens healthy. They are the public servants who keep our communities and our citizens educated. They are the ones who are plowing our roads and repairing our bridges. They are the ones who make our towns, our cities, our neighborhoods livable.

Congress must act to provide assistance to every community. This is a problem we can solve. Let's enact the SMART Act as part of the next coronavirus package.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). The Senator from Delaware.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I am going to briefly remove my mask.

We are about 1 week into baseball season. I will lighten this up a little bit. We are 1 week into baseball season. Some of us here are huge baseball fans. This is the home of the Nationals—home of the world championship Washington Nationals. The best two pitchers come from the Detroit Tigers, my favorite team.

For those who might not have been watching baseball over the weekend, there is a young guy who is a relief pitcher for the Tigers. His name is Tyler Alexander. He was brought in in relief in the second or third inning and struck out nine straight bats. He struck out the first nine batters he faced. I think one other person has done that in Major League history.

So, as we gather here today to figure out how to get out of this mess, his job that day was to try to figure out how to get out of another mess, and my hope is that our efforts here in the Senate, the House, and the White House will be as successful as were his.

I am happy to follow today our friend from Maine; our colleague from New Jersey; and you, Mr. President, as the Senator from Louisiana, in actually pointing to something we can agree on. People are always saying to me and, I know, to my colleagues when we go home: Can't you guys and gals ever agree on anything?

Well, as it turns out, a number of us agree that States and local governments could use some help—some additional help beyond that which we have already provided. That is a good thing. We don't have to pit blue States against red States. We can actually work together, and in this case we are.

Very few of us actually come here and start our first elected job being in the U.S. Senate—some, but not a lot. A number of people are former mayors, former Governors, former Representatives. But every now and then, somebody slips through without ever having run for elected office.

I am a former State treasurer. People call me a recovering Governor, but I am really a recovering State treasurer. I was elected State treasurer when I was 29. When I was elected State treasurer and took my oath, our State had the worst credit rating in the country.

I was elected in 1976—the same year that a Republican named Pete du Pont was elected Governor of our State. He turned out to be a terrific Governor at a time when we needed one. He was a good mentor for me and someone I always looked up to, and I hope I was a good partner to him and Democrats and Republicans in the legislature to pull our State out of a real mess.

Not only did we have the worst credit rating in the country that year—1977, actually—we had the worst credit rating, we had no pension fund, we had no rainy day fund, and we had the lowest start rate of new businesses of any State in America.

We couldn't balance our budgets if we had to. In order to actually have money to spend, we issued revenue anticipation notes.

When I got to the State treasurer's office, I said: What is a revenue anticipation note?

They said: That is the way the State borrows money until tax monies come in the following April, so that we can actually pay payroll and pensions and stuff like that.

I said: You are kidding.

They said: No, we are not.

That was then; this is now. When Pete du Pont was our Governor and I was treasurer, we had a bipartisan legislature. The house and senate were split between Democrats and Republicans. But we created a rainy day fund and never invaded it. We created and fully amortized our pension fund. We

had no pension fund. We fully amortized it within about 10 years. We did all kinds of things, all kinds of budget reforms in order to get us on the right track.

Now, I have heard some of my colleagues say the States got themselves in a mess and they are going to have to get out of it. They said they can file for bankruptcy; they are badly managed.

Let me just say, my State is a AAA State. We got a AAA rating when I was Governor, and we never lost it to this day.

Most States are better run fiscally than the Federal Government. You only have to look at the way we spend money around here—not just in the middle of a pandemic. Look at the year before the pandemic, at how much our Nation's deficit and debt increased. But even fiscally responsible, well-managed States like Delaware and some other States that are represented on this floor right here are finding themselves in a situation that one could not have imagined just a few months ago. That is especially true when we have an administration that is simultaneously asking State and local governments to shoulder the burden of responding to the coronavirus.

Leader MCCONNELL and Secretary Mnuchin say that States don't need more money because they haven't used the coronavirus relief funds that Congress provided in the CARES Act. Well, unfortunately, that is just not true. A survey conducted by the National Association of State Budget Officers shows that States have already allocated nearly 75 percent of these funds already to fight the pandemic and help struggling families and small businesses through this crisis.

If States across this country see a resurgence in infection rates, the cost of addressing the health and economic crisis is not going down; it is going up.

At the same time that the cost of addressing this pandemic has skyrocketed, businesses are shuttered, and tourism and commerce have come, in many places, to a standstill. That means that hundreds of billions of dollars in lost revenues for States and local governments have occurred.

Delaware is certainly not alone. So let me be very clear. This is not a red State or a blue State problem; it is a United States problem. It is not a consequence of poor management either.

Over the past couple months, weeks, I have had conversations, as my colleagues know, with dozens of them on both sides of the aisle about what States and local communities across our country are facing as a result of COVID-19. In those conversations with my Democratic and Republican colleagues, time and again I have heard a familiar refrain: The pandemic has caused State and local government revenues to plummet in a way that none of us have ever experienced or would have or could have foreseen.

Income tax revenues have fallen and unemployment numbers have reached

unprecedented levels over the course of just a few months. Delaying Federal tax deadlines—while it was the right thing to do—has wreaked havoc on the ability of States to balance their budgets. Sales tax collections and revenue from tourism, gas taxes, and tolls have dried up as the virus has compelled many people to just stay at home. And States highly dependent on oil and gas revenues, as the Presiding Officer's State is, have been doubly hit by the pandemic and turmoil in global energy markets.

Unlike the Federal Government, State and local governments have to balance their budgets. This means that Governors, State legislators, and local officials—mayors, city and county councils—have had no choice but to make deep cuts that will inevitably hurt the ability of their communities to recover.

Since the pandemic hit our country, State and local governments alone have lost 1.5 million jobs.

Let me say that again. Since the pandemic hit our country, State and local governments alone have lost 1.5 million jobs.

Those are not private sector jobs. Those are not Federal Government jobs. Those are just State and local, county jobs: teachers, firefighters, police, and more.

This staggering statistic is bad enough on its own, but what does it mean if you aren't one of the one in every eight American workers who is employed by a State or local government?

Here is what it means. Cuts to education budgets means larger class sizes. It means fewer bus drivers. It means fewer custodians at a time when schools are struggling to figure out how they will reopen safely this fall.

I talked earlier this week to a number of our finest school superintendents in Delaware. We talked about—they are struggling—how to open up and reopen schools. As it turns out, they are going to have to hire more bus drivers if schools reopen—more bus drivers because kids will be separated. They have to separate kids. You can't put as many kids on the school bus. They are going to have to hire substitute teachers. If somebody gets sick and they are unable to come to work, they will have to hire a substitute teacher and pay for them as well. And for nurses, it is the same way. To be there to help administer—whether it is taking people's temperatures or administering tests and that kind of thing, we are going to need more health professionals in our schools rather than fewer.

Cuts to first responder budgets mean people must wait longer for EMTs and firefighters to arrive during emergency situations.

Cuts in transportation budgets mean canceled or delayed infrastructure—transportation infrastructure projects—and fewer construction jobs when we are in the middle of the summer construction season.

These cuts impact all of us and create a ripple effect across the broader economy. That is why economists across the political spectrum, including Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, agree that State and local budget cuts will weigh down our path to economic recovery, not just for a couple of weeks, not just for a couple of months, but for years to come.

In fact, based on evidence from the last recession, one recent economic report found that every dollar in cuts cost the overall economy \$1.50 to \$2. That is one reason the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has called for additional Federal aid for States and for cities. The Chamber also recognizes that its lost revenue will force officials out of State and local levels to either miss payments or raise taxes in order to make up the shortfall.

We know that this is impacting every part of our Nation. The longer we wait to get much needed assistance for our State and local governments, the more our communities will suffer and the more at risk we put our entire economy.

We are here. We are sort of like almost in overtime. In fact, we are in overtime when it comes to the supplemental unemployment insurance benefits having expired. We don't have time to wait. Let's pass long overdue assistance. Let's pass it so that our hometowns and our States don't take an even bigger hit that we can't afford but a hit that is avoided.

With that, I want to yield to some of my colleagues who are here to present their own perspectives, and we look forward to hearing from them. The first one, right out of the starting block, is a former Governor of New Hampshire—like me, a recovering Governor—and a terrific U.S. Senator, MAGGIE HASSAN.

I am happy to yield the floor to Senator MAGGIE HASSAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. HASSAN. Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you to my colleague from Delaware, not only for the kind introduction but for the very articulate overview that he just gave of the challenge before us and the importance of providing aid in this next relief package to State and local governments. They have been at the forefront of our Nation's response to COVID-19. They provide people and businesses with vital support, scouring the world for personal protective equipment, setting up testing centers, and providing emergency relief for families and businesses. They also employ millions of essential public employees who are on the frontlines of this crisis, including first responders, teachers, and many others.

Unfortunately, as this crisis rages on, State and local communities are facing uncertainty, mounting costs, and a devastating loss of revenue. For too long, the Senate majority leader, Mr. MCCONNELL, stalled action on an

additional relief package, which has only made matters worse.

Now, as negotiations are finally underway, we must ensure that the next relief bill provides significant additional Federal resources to support State and local governments' efforts to save lives, protect the public's health, and keep the economy moving.

As my colleague from Delaware mentioned, I am a former Governor. I understand the challenges that State and local officials are experiencing. In New Hampshire, following public health guidance, local and State officials took necessary steps to close down portions of the economy in order to save lives.

They are now feeling the impacts of revenue shortfalls directly related to those actions, all while keeping up their efforts to provide the frontline services necessary to save lives and provide economic relief.

In a virtual roundtable with mayors and municipal leaders from all across the Granite State last month, officials described to me the dire situation that they are up against. Dover Mayor Bob Carrier stated: "The tsunami of lost revenue is on its way." Claremont Mayor Charlene Lovett noted how budgetary strains are halting infrastructure projects. With the added burden of increased expenses and loss of revenue, Claremont risks falling behind on much needed infrastructure improvements like fixing roads. And a number of mayors explained their challenges with budgets for the upcoming school year.

As educators and parents make decisions on whether schools will be in person, remote, or a hybrid version, local officials are facing deep uncertainty about what the operational costs for schools will be. Situations like these are playing out in cities and towns all across our country.

Without additional funding from the Federal Government, States will be forced to slash education, to slash infrastructure, and to slash public health budgets, which would be devastating, especially in the midst of a pandemic. It is not just a loss in the services that people depend on. Millions of additional jobs would be lost as well—not only the jobs of public workers, by the way, but, for example, the private vendors who often do some of this work. Think about construction workers on an infrastructure project.

Moody's Analytics reported that without significant Federal support for State and local governments, 4 million more people—4 million more people—could lose their jobs. That loss would be catastrophic. The ripple effect would be felt throughout our entire economy. We can't let that happen.

Senate Democrats are focused on providing significant economic relief for State and local governments throughout our country because we recognize that it is essential for economic recovery. And, as part of our efforts to support economic recovery, we must ensure that States have the flexibility to

use this funding to backfill revenue loss due to COVID-19 and preserve jobs. Providing this funding will mitigate some of the economic damage caused by this pandemic.

In addition, as we have heard from local leaders, from educators, from parents, it is vital that we provide separate, dedicated funding for schools. Senate Democrats have proposed \$430 billion to help schools implement public health protocols, address the challenges of students who have fallen behind, and provide quality education to all students, regardless of how the schools reopen.

Our approach stands in stark contrast to the inadequate proposal put forward by Senator MCCONNELL, which provides too few resources to schools and would actually withhold aid if schools don't fully reopen in person, even as the administration has failed to provide supplies and a strategy that would support such efforts to reopen.

We need our Republican colleagues to work with us and deliver sufficient relief without any further delay. We need to provide State and local governments—as well as our schools, our first responders, our teachers—with strong bipartisan support from the Federal Government.

I know that right now in New Hampshire, even as teachers face uncertainty, they are making lesson plans and trying to figure out how they are going to make sure that their children engage in their remote learning at home if their school system doesn't reopen, while providing services to their students as well.

All across our State, I know that if today's heavy rains caused flooding, our public workers will be out there around the clock protecting their communities. I know that our law enforcement, our firefighters will continue to respond to calls whether or not they have enough personal protective equipment because that is what they do. They protect, and they serve. They do it with dedication, and they do it with commitment. They provide essential services that keep our communities safe and healthy. It has never been as important as it is now.

All we are asking is that we come together across party lines, with the White House, and support our State and local governments in this time of need so that we can continue to fight this pandemic and so that we can continue to mitigate the economic harm that is ravaging our country.

That is what State and local aid will provide to the people of New Hampshire and the people of our country. That is what this moment—this moment of the worst healthcare crisis that we have seen in 100 years and the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression—that is what this moment demands. The livelihoods of millions of Americans and the lives of millions of Americans depend on our taking action right now.

I yield the floor to my colleague from Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank Senator HASSAN for her leadership. She speaks about State government and local government so well because she was Governor of New Hampshire. She is one of only two women in American history who has been a Governor and a Senator—a senator, a Governor, and then a Senator. Thank you for your on-going leadership.

Senator CARPER, thank you for leading this effort.

We know Senator MCCONNELL's office is down the hall there. For months, we have been begging—begging—Senator MCCONNELL, begging President Trump to do something, to actually let us do our jobs. We wanted to legislate. We wanted to do the things that Senator HASSAN has just talked about.

I am not really sure how MITCH MCCONNELL has spent his summer. What I do know is that in May, the House of Representatives passed the Heroes Act. It helped local governments. It helped people stay in their homes so they wouldn't be evicted. It helped our public school system. It provided \$600 to unemployed workers, and what is remarkable about that is even during this pandemic, we haven't seen the poverty rate go up in this country because of the \$600 per week that millions of unemployed workers are receiving, which they have earned.

The House did that in May. I don't know what Senator MCCONNELL has done since—through May, through June, through July, now into August, and, finally, he comes up with something. We have asked him to extend the unemployment insurance for literally the hundreds of thousands of workers in my State, the thousands of workers in Nevada, the tens of thousands of workers in Louisiana. We have asked the President and the majority leader to extend that unemployment insurance.

But do you know what?

It is pretty unbelievable to hear of people on this side of the aisle making \$175,000 a year as U.S. Senators—most of my colleagues are millionaires—and they complain that these unemployed workers are getting \$600 a week. They complain that these workers are getting too much money as we earn \$175,000 a year.

Last week, Senator MCCONNELL finally came up with a plan that does nothing to extend the \$600 a week and that does nothing to keep people in their homes and help them pay the bills. The last thing we should want is a tidal wave of evictions so that people will have to go into crowded homeless shelters or sleep in their cousins' basements because they don't have places to live.

The bill does nothing to help State and local governments. Their plan has zero dollars for communities—for Clark County, OH, or Clark County, NV. We know how hard their budgets have been hit. Ohio's Governor has al-

ready announced \$750 million in State budget cuts, including for education and Medicaid, and counties and cities and towns are facing similar impossible choices. We know, with there being hundreds of thousands of Ohioans out of jobs, if they don't get the \$600 a week, it will mean that more of them will go into poverty, that more of them will have trouble feeding their families, and that more of them will go into homeless shelters. It will only get worse if we don't step in.

Let's be clear about what it will mean if we don't get more funding. It will mean the layoff of teachers, the layoff of firefighters, the layoff of children's services workers. It will mean less money for schools—and not just to buy new technology they need for remote learning. School costs have gone up. They have to make the buses safer and the cafeterias safer and the technology for remote learning and the classrooms safer. It will mean fewer resources for schools to expand broadband and close the digital divide. It will mean putting critical infrastructure projects on hold. It will mean property tax hikes and sales tax increases.

I have talked to mayors and teachers and school board members. I spend a good chunk of my time, as I know my colleagues do, on virtual roundtables and conference calls. I talk to mayors and teachers, school board members and firefighters, chambers of commerce, county health commissioners, and university and college presidents.

I was on the phone yesterday with 100 county commissioners in Ohio—most of them Republicans. I had a call organized by the Richland County Chamber of Commerce—my hometown—with, probably, mostly Republicans. Last week, it was the Cincinnati Chamber—probably mostly Republicans—the Ohio college presidents, and Northeast Ohio parents and educators. There was another call with Southwest Ohio parents and educators.

In every one of these calls, I heard the fear in people's voices and the demand that we do something—that we don't just walk away like President Trump and MITCH MCCONNELL are doing. They are going to either raise taxes on Ohioans who are hurting or they are going to lay off workers and cut services people rely on.

One issue that comes up over and over is the fear that communities are being set back years in our fight against addiction. The addiction crisis didn't go away; it just got layered on top of this new health and economic catastrophe. If we don't get State and local governments additional funding, they are going to cut addiction services, and they are going to cut mental health services. You know that, clearly, the number of child abuse cases has gone up during this but not the reported cases. We don't know about them because kids aren't going to school and church to be able to have teachers, parents, people in the community, and ministers report cases of

child abuse. Also, the social workers who go into the homes have been laid off.

We need to be clear about what “mass layoffs” means. It means, if a county in Ohio cuts the staff for schools, it is not just the individual educators who get hurt; obviously, our kids suffer, and the economy suffers. It means a longer recession, a deeper recession. Yet Senator MCCONNELL says 20 people on his side of the aisle are just going to walk away. They are not even willing to vote for help for schools, for unemployed workers, for people about to be foreclosed on or evicted, or for local governments. You know, the stock market is doing OK, but the stock market is not the economy.

We will not have a real recovery until we invest in the real economy in communities in Ohio and Nevada and Arkansas and across this country. Ohioans shouldn’t have to fend for themselves in the middle of a once-in-a-generation crisis. That is essentially what the Trump-McConnell plan—if you can even call it a serious plan—tells Ohio communities: You are on your own. You are on your own.

We must pass a recovery bill, and it must include new, flexible funding. Trust the communities. Trump and MCCONNELL don’t trust local communities. They send a few dollars here and there. They attach strings to it because they don’t trust local communities. I trust my local school boards. I trust my local county commissioners. I trust my local mayors. We have to get them help. They know what is best for their communities. Let them do their jobs.

Senator MCCONNELL and President Trump, let us do our jobs.

I yield the floor to the junior Senator from Nevada.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, I rise today because our States, cities, and Tribes are in trouble, and they desperately need our help.

State, local, and Tribal governments are on the frontlines in this fight against the coronavirus. We have seen local leaders in each of our States step up during this difficult time to do what is necessary to mitigate the spread of this virus, to protect the health and well-being of their residents, and to prevent critical industries and institutions from failing.

Their goal is the same as ours—to protect the lives and livelihoods of the people whom they represent. I know this to be true in Nevada, where dedicated heroes are working tirelessly to combat the COVID-19 pandemic in every corner of the Silver State. However, this proactive and necessary response has not come without a cost. In addition to the coronavirus, Nevada must also deal with an alarming budget shortfall that has been exacerbated by a struggling economy that relies on tourism and a massive drop in tax revenue.

Before this crisis began, Nevada had not mismanaged its State’s finances. The State had a record-low unemployment rate of 3.6 percent, and we had a rainy day fund for emergencies, but we have needed to use hundreds of millions of dollars from that rainy day fund in order to try to address our budget shortfall. Nevada has a tough road ahead and difficult choices to make, but Nevada is not alone. Many States across the country are identical. They are in similar situations. Red and blue States are facing this very challenge due to no fault of their own. Cities and towns are struggling to contain the health and fiscal impacts of this pandemic.

During a special session of the Nevada State Legislature, lawmakers overwhelmingly approved a resolution to ask Congress and the Trump administration for funding for State, local, and Tribal governments in order to help offset an expected \$1.2 billion budget shortfall caused by this pandemic, and they needed the flexibility to spend it based on local needs.

Nevada’s Governor, Steve Sisolak, offered a stern warning, one that applies to the whole Nation: Without additional Federal support for State and local funding, States will be “forced to make impossible decisions regarding funding critical public health, education, and more.”

Without additional State and local funding from Congress, our State’s budget shortfall will make it overwhelmingly difficult to provide healthcare to everyone who needs it, to fund our local school systems, and to pay our first responders, and it would leave countless Nevadans in distress who rely on public programs.

The CARES Act established a coronavirus relief fund to support States, Tribes, and large local governments. In Nevada, that funding has helped to provide support for Medicare providers, which has allowed continued healthcare for our seniors and treatment for those high-risk COVID-19 patients. It has provided for enhanced testing and contact tracing in our communities. It has provided for childcare programs that are used by essential workers. It has provided home-delivered meals, home healthcare, and support for families and their caregivers. It has provided PPE and critical supplies, like gloves and masks and sanitizers.

Does any of this sound unnecessary to you?

This crisis isn’t over, and those needs are still here. I have spoken to mayors and county commissioners across Nevada, and they are worried. They must make it through to the other side of this crisis. They want to protect and they want to secure their communities. They are counting on us. They are counting on Congress to have their backs in this effort. Congress must ensure that support reaches all Americans in every kind of community.

One of the CARES Act relief fund’s shortcomings was that it provided no

direct support to cities and localities with populations under 500,000. For a State like Nevada, that means, except for Las Vegas, every other city in the Silver State would be excluded from direct funding from the Federal Government. That is why, in April, Senator CORTEZ MASTO and I joined Senator HEINRICH in introducing the Coronavirus Community Relief Act—legislation that would provide \$250 billion in new stabilization funds directly to cities and counties with populations under 500,000.

We know State and local leaders are the ones best equipped to respond to their communities’ unique needs, and they are desperate. They desperately need the resources to do this. Unfortunately, Leader MCCONNELL has refused to allow the Senate to take up the Heroes Act—legislation passed by the House that provides continued support for State, local, and Tribal governments, including those cities and counties with under 500,000 residents. It recognizes that the pandemic continues to damage our communities and that this recovery will take time.

The Heroes Act would allow States to pay for frontline healthcare workers, first responders, teachers, and other workers, and would continue to provide those essential services to all of our residents. The House passed the Heroes Act over 80 days ago—80 days ago—while the majority leader’s own proposed legislation, the HEALS Act, does absolutely nothing to address the critical issue of State and local funding.

Without action, States across the Nation will face consequences that could have a devastating impact on countless lives. History will judge the way we treated each other during this pandemic. Each of us in the U.S. Senate is in a position to do something—just something. I implore my colleagues to consider the lives of their constituents, to really pay attention, to really hear what is happening in their communities and in communities across this Nation—in town after town, in city after city—and I want them to remember that we are all in this together.

I yield the floor to the great senior Senator from the State of Nevada, CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, you can hear the passion not only in my colleague Senator ROSEN, with whom I am proud to stand side by side to represent the great State of Nevada, but in all of the Senators on the floor today in their talking about this particular issue.

At kitchen tables all over the country, including in Nevada, families are sitting down and are pouring over their budgets. Too many of them are trying to figure out how to stretch those budgets with no income, and they are making difficult decisions on which bills need the most urgent attention.

Our State and local and Tribal governments across this country are doing

the same thing. With the economic downturn caused by the coronavirus pandemic, State and local governments have less revenue at a time when they need those resources to combat the virus and keep Nevadans safe. That is why, when Congress passed the CARES Act in March, the Democrats fought so hard for funding for State, local, and Tribal governments.

We wanted to make sure that State and local governments had enough cash on hand to cover the urgent costs of the pandemic so that they could keep services running and expand their responses during this crisis. We needed to guarantee these governments could cover the costs of emergency shelters for COVID patients. We had to make sure that frontline responders had enough personal protective equipment on hand for them to do their jobs. We also wanted local governments to help people stay in their homes. We allocated \$150 billion from the coronavirus relief fund for State, local, and Tribal governments in March. That was a compromise. We came together. We worked together to solve that problem. I heard on the floor of the Senate today that there is bipartisan support for this funding as well, but we all knew back in March, when we passed the \$150 billion as part of the CARES Act, that it was not going to be enough.

We weren't sure, but now we know it is not enough, and we have to do something about it.

We are seeing across the country how local governments and States are dealing with this pandemic.

Senator ROSEN just noted that in Nevada, we are in the middle of a special session. The Governor had to call a special session of our legislature because we have a budget hole of about \$1.2 billion related to COVID-19 pandemic and the impact it has had.

What is that impact? It is the impact we all have asked across this country. Listen, we are in the middle of a health crisis. Until we have that vaccine, we have to keep people safe. And the one thing that we have asked them across the country, including in the State of Nevada, in every county, is that if you shelter in place, if you go home, if you shut your business and help us stem the spread of this virus, we will take care of you. We will help you put food on the table. We will help you pay your rent, make sure you have a roof over your head, pay your utility bills. We will put money in your pockets.

Oh, and by the way, we will make sure that those small businesses have access to liquidity so that when we can come outside and outdoors again safely and securely, our economy will spring back that much quicker.

Unfortunately, when we asked everyone across the country to follow that advice and stay safe, we made a commitment to them as well—a long-term commitment—that we would continue to work together in a bipartisan way to solve this problem and make sure that people and individuals had money in

their pockets and that businesses had access to liquidity so that we could get through this crisis together.

In Nevada—and we have seen this conversation happening across the country—schools are opening in just a few short weeks, and many of the leaders in my State at the State and local level are looking to Washington for help.

Most States aren't allowed to borrow to meet these expenses, and I know our esteemed majority leader has thought that bankruptcy is an option for them, but I can tell you that for me and for Nevada, this is not an option. It just cannot happen.

In the State of Nevada, like most States, they are required by law to balance their budgets. Tribal councils, county commissions, and the Nevada State Legislature are doing what families have been asked to do—they are coming together to ask themselves how they can pay the most urgent bills in that big stack of bills that are coming due right now. They are working around the clock to get Nevadans the support they need to deliver the services they expect—everything from fighting wildfires that are happening right now in Nevada and across the West to rethinking how we address and open our schools safely for our kids and for our staff, for the teachers and the administrators. But those repairs that are required for our roads and bridges—the work that still needs to be done on a daily basis—have to continue. So governments across this country are continuing to juggle those many needs.

On top of all of that, we know we want them to all securely hold 2020 elections. We want to make sure that our families are connected to school and work, that there is no homework gap, and that Medicaid benefits to those in need are available. We need to keep EMTs on the job and help businesses comply with safety regulations during the middle of this pandemic. With all these demands, States haven't been able to keep up with those essential bills.

I will tell you this: I have talked to, in my State, like many of us do—we go home, or when we are here, we make sure that we are communicating with so many people across our State.

In Nevada, we have beautifully diverse communities, and we have urban and rural areas. I have talked to the leaders of all of our counties, our city governments, and our Governor. Whether they are Republican or Democratic or Independent, there is still one thing in common: They want us to come together to find a solution to help and support them during this time when there is no revenue coming in because our economy has been ground to a halt as we address this health crisis.

They have all asked both me and JACKY ROSEN, Senator ROSEN: Please continue to fight for us and make sure that the money not only is there and available, because we need it to keep our constituents safe, but make sure it

is flexible. Make sure we have the opportunity not just to work through the State, but that the money goes directly to some of our local governments, who I have found—and I don't know, as you all go home, but I have found that the money that we did give to them through the CARES Act has been put to good use because—do you know why—because local and State governments and Tribal governments know what their communities need.

Why should we dictate to them if they want to use that money to help people who need rental assistance at this point in time or if they want to use that money to put food on people's tables because they are not working? I mean, isn't that what this is about—all of us working together to help our families across this country, to make sure we can all stay safe but still pay those bills and still keep our families safe and make sure our businesses are taken care of.

But I know this: At the end of the day, in the middle of a crisis, our governments at the State, local, and Tribal government level are the social safety nets. Where do you think our constituents go when they need that help?

So I think and know that we have an obligation at the Federal level to continue to work with our State and local governments and our Tribal governments to provide them the necessary resources that are needed right now in the middle of this pandemic because our economy has been ground to a halt.

So I think it is time for our body to come together and do what the American people expect of us, which is to work in a bipartisan way to solve this problem and really look at how we can continue the funding that is necessary for our State and local governments. Families not only in Nevada but across this country expect that of us now.

So I would hope the majority leader would be willing to bring to the floor whatever bill is appropriate to have this discussion. And I will tell you, there are three out there right now. There is the Heroes Act, there is the SMART Act, which has bipartisan support, and there is the Coronavirus Community Relief Act. There are three bills. Let's bring them to the floor. Let's have this discussion, with the focus on coming together to get the funding to our State and local governments and our Tribal communities that is needed right now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, we are on the precipice of a depression because of politics. Right now, every single State and most counties and most cities are experiencing a budget crisis like they haven't seen in generations.

Tax revenues are down due to high unemployment, rising healthcare costs, and the drop in consumer spending and emergency relief costs continue to skyrocket, and that means our States, our cities, and our towns have run out of

money or are quickly running out of money. But in the latest proposal, the Republicans allocate nothing at all to State and local government. You heard that correctly. In midst of the biggest public health crisis in a century, Republicans will not send a single dollar in emergency aid to our States, our cities, and to our counties.

Economically, this is just ridiculously bad. It will cost roughly 4 million jobs, and it will have a direct impact on GDP and on the programs and services that we need in order to come out on the other side of this pandemic.

Budget shortfalls among State and local governments are approaching half a trillion already, and for my home State of Hawaii, we are confronting over a billion dollars in losses.

Unlike the Federal Government, our State and local governments are operating with finite amounts of dollars. They don't have an unlimited line of credit. And a majority of States require a balanced budget by the end of the year. So it is one thing for States and counties and municipalities to juggle and survive for a few months by moving money around, using cash flow management, paying bills late, relying on rainy day or reserve funds, but they can't do that forever. By now, many have burned up their reserves, and the cupboard is bare, and the bills are due.

The decisions that the Republicans are making right now—the official policy as it relates to funding local governments is to force millions to be laid off in the middle of the worst pandemic in 100 years.

Refusing to send aid to States and local governments isn't just cruel; it is bad economic strategy. Moody's released a report projecting that it could shave as much as three full percentage points from GDP—three full percentage points from GDP.

There are certain things that are not within the U.S. Senate's control as it relates to GDP, but this is a choice we are about to make—to lay off public service workers, to actually—I mean, we passed the PPP program, which basically subsidizes keeping people employed. We passed this expanded unemployment insurance, which—as Senator CORTEZ MASTO pointed out, we mandatorily said: Stay home, and we will take care of you. Now the official public policy of the Republican conference is to lay off firefighters and nurses and teachers.

I know that we get real heated in terms of our rhetoric sometimes on the Senate floor, and we accuse the other side of things that are maybe shading the truth in ways that are unfavorable. But I just want to point out that that is the official public policy of the Republicans right now—that States and counties and cities get zero; firehouses get zero; public health nurses get zero; teachers get zero—and that if they had their way, they would pass a coronavirus aid package that forces us to lay people off—public health nurses, public school administrators, public

sanitation workers, teachers—in the middle of a situation where the virus is much worse than it was 3 months ago and the economy is much worse than it was 3 months ago.

So I reject the premise that this is some sort of Democratic ask. Now, I could go through the list of the National Conference of Mayors, the National Governors Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures—all of the organizations that on a bipartisan basis represent governance. They all want State and county relief to come into this package. I could go through that, but I just reject the premise on a human level that we have to demand, as though it is some sort of progressive wish list—it is not a carbon tax, right? It is not criminal justice reform. It is not gay rights. This is allowing firefighters to stay employed. This is allowing our public hospitals not to lay off people in the middle of a pandemic. This is allowing our school systems not to lay off teachers.

This isn't a Democratic ask, this is an American ask, and I reject the premise that the leader of the Senate, MITCH MCCONNELL, is going to treat this as something that is to be traded for. We don't trade for keeping our firefighters employed. We don't trade for keeping our nurses employed. We just do that because it is the right thing to do, and we especially do that in the middle of the worst public health crisis in a century and the worst economic situation we have had in almost a century.

I reject the idea that Leader SCHUMER and Leader MCCONNELL and Speaker PELOSI and Secretary Mnuchin have to cut a deal on State and local funding. Every single Member of the U.S. Senate, as soon as this ends up in the bill, is going to take credit for it. They are going to say: Look, I got you money. But let the record reflect that the proposal from the Republican conference was that States, counties, and municipalities get zero, and that is not tenable.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I wanted to join my colleagues on the floor today to support legislation that would address the needs that we are hearing from State and local governments and that would support bipartisan legislation to address this pandemic. That is what we have had to date, and there is no reason why we can't get there this time.

As you know so well, last week the United States crossed a devastating milestone. More than 150,000 Americans, including 417 Granite Staters, have died due to complications from COVID-19. Sadly, as we all know, those numbers keep increasing. The coronavirus pandemic has also wreaked havoc on our economy. The Commerce Department reported on Friday that our gross domestic product had shrunk

to nearly 33 percent—the sharpest economic decline in modern American history.

For months, my colleagues and I have been coming to the floor, week after week, urging the majority to take up proposals that would provide critical changes to our healthcare system and comprehensive relief for our economy, but what we have gotten is a package that fails to address many of the concerns I have heard from Granite Staters.

The bill that was presented to this Senate by the Republican majority doesn't provide dedicated funding to help nursing homes and long-term care facilities, which are the most vulnerable to COVID-19. In fact, in New Hampshire, 80 percent of our deaths from coronavirus have been to people in long-term care facilities—the highest percentage in the country.

This package doesn't include housing assistance and eviction protections. It inadequately funds testing, and it pressures schools to reopen in order to receive assistance.

Importantly, the bill lacks any support for State and local governments that are struggling to maintain essential services while they are also on the frontlines battling this pandemic. Every day, mayors and community leaders tell me about what they are facing—the massive reduction in local tax revenues and increased costs due to COVID-19 response efforts. These challenges have left our State and municipal governments in dire straits.

I would like to read an excerpt from a letter I received from Mayor Joyce Craig, the mayor of Manchester, New Hampshire's largest city. She says:

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Manchester was thriving. Over the past two years, we saw over \$250 million in new, private investments in economic development; we expanded air service from the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport; and we were seeing a continual decrease in opioid overdoses. But due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our bright path forward has grown foggy, and I am concerned about what lays ahead for my city.

Mayor Craig goes on to say that since the pandemic began, Manchester's revenue is down by over \$3.5 million, including a \$1.6 million decrease in property taxes that are collected. In total, the State of New Hampshire expects to experience a budget shortfall of nearly \$540 million. That is about a 20-percent drop in State revenues.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the letter I quoted from Mayor Craig of Manchester be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

JULY 27, 2020.

Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN,
Washington, DC.

Senator MAGGIE HASSAN,
Washington, DC.

Congressman CHRIS PAPPAS,
Washington, DC.

Congresswoman ANNIE KUSTER,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SEN. SHAHEEN, SEN. HASSAN, REP. KUSTER & REP. PAPPAS: Thank you for your leadership in the midst of this global pandemic.

As you know, New Hampshire's cities and towns are on the front lines of responding to COVID-19. Day in and day out, we see the direct impact this pandemic is having on our residents, businesses, and non-profits. It's a time of disruption like we have never experienced before.

None of us know how long this crisis will last, but we are thankful for your tireless efforts to advocate for Granite Staters through the 'Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. I am writing you today to urge you to support and advocate for sending additional relief directly to municipalities like the City of Manchester in the 'Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Manchester was thriving. Over the past two years, we saw over \$250 million dollars in new, private investments in economic development; we expanded air service from the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport; and we were seeing a continual decrease in opioid overdoses. But due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our bright path forward has grown foggy, and I am concerned about what lays ahead for my city.

Just as many small businesses and corporations are struggling, so are our municipalities. In an effort to reduce the financial burden on our citizens and business, local governments have absorbed many costs, which has resulted in a significant reduction in revenue. Since the pandemic began, our City's revenue is down by over \$3.5 million to date, including a \$1.6 million decrease in property taxes collected, and a \$750,000 in parking revenue reduction. Additionally, our partners, like the New Hampshire Fisher Cats, are asking for financial help from the City to ensure they make it through this difficult time.

While Manchester and other New Hampshire cities and towns have received some additional funding through the CARES Act, we are extremely limited in the way that we're able to use these funds. We are often unable to be reimbursed for the expenses that the City needs most at this time, like revenue losses, property tax relief and affordable housing.

We have had to make hard decisions to keep our city afloat. City departments have had to hold 28 vacancies, have put a freeze on all non-essential spending, and have been forced to reduce some City services, like parks and recreation activities and facilities. Our city employees have gone above and beyond to fill these gaps, but without additional funding, our staffing and service reductions will continue to grow.

Our citizens are fueling the burden of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many have had their hours cut back or have lost their jobs. They have lost childcare, and some are on the verge of losing their homes. At this difficult time, cities need to be increasing the services that it offers to our residents, not decreasing them. Manchester is facing an affordable housing and homelessness crisis that has been exasperated by COVID-19. As we inch closer to the moratorium on evictions being lifted, it is more important than

ever that municipalities like Manchester receive federal funds that can be used to prevent homelessness and alleviate our housing crisis.

Just as financial assistance was sent directly to individuals and small businesses impacted by COVID-19, the cities and towns managing local responses to this pandemic should be allocated the necessary resources to properly care for our citizens.

I appreciate the work that you are all doing in Washington to fight for the people of New Hampshire. When you are fighting for the Granite State in Congress, I urge you to keep the State's municipalities in mind.

Sincerely,

JOYCE CRAIG,

Mayor,

City of Manchester.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Today, I also spoke to the mayor of Nashua, Jim Donchess. The mayor told me that he expects to lose 10 percent to 20 percent of the revenue base in Nashua. That is \$7 million to \$15 million. That means that services would be affected and workers would have to be laid off.

In fact, as he told me, if he had to take all of the savings that he would need to achieve from the revenue losses from just one agency, it would result in laying off half of the entire police department in the city or laying off 150 to 200 teachers. Obviously, that is not tenable.

I also heard from the mayor of Berlin, Paul Grenier, the mayor of New Hampshire's northernmost city. He told me because of the impacts of COVID-19, the State of New Hampshire is also facing revenue shortfalls. As I said, they are expecting about \$540 million in revenue losses. As he said, if the Federal Government doesn't provide some help to State and local communities, his city of Berlin is expected to lose not just any potential funding at the Federal level but State funds it had budgeted for because it was anticipating that it would get State funding as it usually does. So losing help from Congress in any COVID-4 package would have a double impact on the city of Berlin and other cities and municipalities across New Hampshire.

I heard from mayors, town administrators, from local leaders, and from our Republican Governor Kirsten Noonan. All of them are grappling with whether they will be able to fund the services that they have committed to, whether they will have to lay off first responders, firefighters, police and teachers if Federal assistance doesn't arrive soon.

New Hampshire is not alone. We just heard Senator SCHATZ talking about the impact on Hawaii and Senators CORTEZ MASTO and ROSEN talking about the impact on Nevada. Everyone who has been to the floor is talking about what will happen in their States if we don't do something to help.

No State could have anticipated the economic fallout from this pandemic. That is why it is essential that Congress provide Federal support to help State and local governments as they respond to this crisis.

We have done that before in the bipartisan CARES Act. New Hampshire

was able to receive \$1.25 billion to help reimburse the State for its COVID-19 response. These funds have been used in New Hampshire to create relief programs for county and municipal governments, small businesses, nonprofits of all sizes, frontline workers, and for healthcare providers. But of course, as we know, that money is running out, and so more needs to be done.

We need State and local funds to provide additional support for families who are experiencing housing insecurity or homelessness, minority- and women-owned small businesses and individuals in recovery or are in need of mental health services. New Hampshire has been severely affected by the opioid epidemic, and people who have substance use disorders are feeling the impact of this coronavirus perhaps more than their neighbors and other people in our State.

In addition to providing dedicated funding for State and local jurisdictions, the next relief package should remove bureaucratic restrictions preventing these governments from using emergency relief funds as they see fit. Congress should also provide dedicated funding for counties, cities, and for municipalities with fewer than 500,000 residents. They need access to this funding because they are just as much on the frontlines—the rural communities in my State—as the biggest cities in this Nation. Communities of all sizes are facing substantial loss of revenue due to COVID-19, and they need our help.

Local leaders are calling out for help. We can't just sit idly by and let these governments go bankrupt, as the majority leader suggests.

This shouldn't be a partisan issue. We all have a common interest in preserving as much of our economy as possible so that we are positioned for a full and robust recovery once we get this coronavirus behind us. So I would hope that all of my colleagues in the Senate would recognize the urgency of this situation we are in and that we will take up and pass legislation that will provide assistance to State and local governments and provide the relief that Americans are calling for.

The House passed legislation more than 2 months ago. Too much time has been lost, and it is time for Congress to act now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, we are heartbroken for the more than 155,000 Americans we have lost in this pandemic. We are grateful for those on the frontlines—the doctors, nurses, the healthcare workers who have served and sacrificed, and we are committed to finding a better way forward.

There is no excuse for how this virus has spread here in the United States. We have the capacity, the expertise, but we have not demonstrated the coordinated strategy or Presidential leadership to overcome this pandemic

and economic disaster. Instead, the President engages in a pattern of denial and delay, downplaying the scope of this crisis.

This failed approach has led to thousands of premature deaths, double-digit unemployment, shuttered businesses, and spiking infection rates throughout the country. The economy will not snap back until we get COVID-19 under control and until States and communities have the resources they need to get a handle on this public health emergency.

The costs of fighting COVID-19 is rising. State and local budgets are now under severe strain while demand for essential public services, including medical care, safety, and sanitation, is going up and up and up. Moreover, schools need additional resources to reopen and support students, and the revenue that is coming in to our States and cities and towns is insufficient.

Without more help, they will be forced to make drastic cuts which, in my State, could mean cutting critical funding for hospitals and nursing homes in a State with one of the oldest populations in the country, zeroing out the State's job training program, closing a prison facility, cutting Medicaid eligibility for vulnerable adults, and reducing childcare reimbursement rates, impacting working families and childcare providers throughout the State.

With State and local governments forced to lay off more workers, the unemployment crisis worsens, the customer base for Main Street shrinks, and the economy slides even further away from rebuilding. Indeed, the U.S. economy shrank at a 32.9-percent annualized pace between April and June.

We must break this vicious cycle by passing another emergency relief package that is right-sized to the challenge.

The CARES Act is about \$1.7 trillion, a huge number—difficult to fathom. It wasn't enough. Not even close. In fact, the pricetag was smaller than the 2017 Republican tax bill. Those who now claim they can't afford to help the unemployed and the communities throughout America are the same who quickly passed that \$1.9 trillion tax bill in 2017, which largely benefited big businesses and the very wealthy at the expense of the average taxpayer who needs our help now.

If there was a will then to spend so much so quickly on an ill-conceived and misdirected tax bill, the majority should have no qualms about spending whatever it takes now to beat this virus that is attacking our citizens and our economy.

For starters, we need improved testing and contact tracing, more support for our hospitals and healthcare providers, and an effective approach to vaccine development and distribution. All while preserving as much of our economy as we can to have a strong foundation from which to rebuild and rebound.

As Federal Reserve Chairman Jay Powell said last Wednesday, "The path of the economy is going to depend to a very high extent on the course of the virus, on the measures that we take to keep it in check. . . . We can't say it enough."

That is why we need additional and flexible Federal assistance for State and local governments that are fighting this virus on the frontlines while also trying to keep their local economies afloat. I said before the CARES Act passed, we needed \$750 billion for State and local governments to do both. The CARES Act included \$150 billion, and I have new legislation to provide \$600 billion more.

We should support our State and local governments because they support our economy and, just as importantly, they protect our constituents from COVID-19.

By standing in the way of additional Federal funds for State and local governments, Republicans may force these governments to raise taxes on our constituents, make additional cuts to critical services, or worst, do both. Let's avoid more self-inflicted pain.

Getting a handle on COVID-19 also means keeping families in their homes and avoiding waves of evictions and foreclosures that would lead to a major spike in homelessness, which would likely mean more infections.

At the same time, we should continue expanded unemployment benefits and provide nutrition assistance so people in desperate circumstances, through no fault of their own, can afford to pay their bills and eat. We must provide relief for the hardest hit businesses, many of which will continue to be shut down for the foreseeable future, including relief to the transportation sector.

Any agreement should also include more help for childcare providers, public schools, and college campuses to safely reopen, and support for libraries to keep our communities connected. We must do all of this so that once we have gotten a better handle on the coronavirus, we have enough workers and businesses with which to rebuild our economy.

We also can't lose sight of the need to safeguard our election infrastructure. Our Nation and our economy can't take any more uncertainty. Hand in hand with that is supporting the U.S. Postal Service and its employees, who will play an integral role in delivering mail ballots and are continuing to provide a lifeline to Americans.

For the past 60 consecutive years, Democrats and Republicans have come together to strengthen our national security by passing the National Defense Authorization Act. I hope we can carry this same spirit of courtesy and cooperation as we craft the next fiscal relief package. Indeed, our national security also depends on the critical pillar of a strong and vibrant economy. We need to act sooner rather than later on a comprehensive and robust fiscal package.

With that, I yield the floor in the hopes that we will move quickly to legislation that will satisfy the needs of our cities and towns of all Americans so we can move forward together.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE KAROS

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and thank a very good friend of mine, Mayor George Karos of the city of Martinsburg—I said his name wrong, and I don't want to do that because he is a good friend of mine—for his great service to the city of Martinsburg and the entire State of West Virginia.

He was always really great to work with and always gave credit to staff, and he did it with such good humor.

George is the son of Greek immigrants who did not speak English when they came to this country. They moved to Martinsburg before he was born. George was born in the early 1930s. George has called Martinsburg his home his entire life.

Growing up, he worked at Patterson's Drug Store on Queens Street, where he swept the floors and rode his bike to deliver prescriptions. Over time, he worked his way up in the ranks, taking over the soda fountain and eventually worked as an assistant in the pharmacy section of the drugstore.

George did leave Martinsburg briefly when he served his country in the U.S. Naval Hospital Corps, where he was stationed at both Bethesda Naval Hospital and Quantico Marine Corps Base in Virginia. He eventually returned to his home that he loved—Martinsburg—and he returned to Patterson's Drug Store, which he later bought in 1980 and operated until his retirement in 2015. He then began a career as a public servant.

George was first elected to the city council as a councilperson-at-large in June of 1974, where he served for 26 years.

Following this, he decided to run for mayor of Martinsburg, and he served as the mayor for about 20 years and will retire this year at the age of 88.

George and I started our careers together. I started as his Congresswoman in the year 2000, and George started as mayor.

I know I speak for all of those from the Martinsburg community when I say that Mayor Karos truly made Martinsburg a better place to work and live.

I have had the honor and privilege of working closely with Mayor Karos during his entire time serving as the mayor of Martinsburg. We had a field hearing out in Martinsburg, and I remember the mayor being there and welcoming us. I see him at many ribbon cuttings and openings. I have been to his drugstore to be served at the counter. He is just a wonderful, wonderful man.