

Nation actually needs. We want to take second runs at the best and most successful parts of the bipartisan CARES Act while adding in bold new steps for this new phase of our Nation's battle.

But as I said right from the outset, Republicans had no illusion that our initial marker would become law. That isn't how divided government operates. There was never any question that bipartisan compromise would be needed to get an outcome. So I expected that, just like in March, the Democratic ranking members would sit down with our chairmen, bring some of their own serious ideas to the table, and work together to build a bipartisan bill. That is what happened back then. But, instead, the country got something else entirely.

Instead of working with our serious framework, the Speaker of the House and the Senate Democratic leader spent weeks insisting on a completely—completely—unrealistic, far-left proposal that even their own Democratic Members mocked as a nowhere messaging stunt the instant it was first released.

Instead of letting their committees and their Members discuss substantive issues across the aisle, they said nobody could negotiate but them. And instead of staying focused on the real needs of our Nation, these two Democratic leaders have held the talks hostage for weeks now—weeks—over nonCOVID-related ideological items, which the political left has wanted since well before this virus hit our shores.

You know what I am talking about. By now, the whole country knows what I am talking about: the absurd issues the Democrats have turned into sticking points; the bizarre, parochial left-wing favors that Democrats have put ahead of the help that working families need right now, like the massive tax cuts for the highest earners in the bluest States—an idea that even supposedly progressive economists have said is “not a good idea”; the trillion-dollar slush fund for State and local governments that have only spent 25 percent—25 percent—of the billions that we sent them back in March, totally out of proportion to any estimate of urgent pandemic shortfalls; the socialist insistence on the Federal Government paying people more not to work—not to work—than essential workers earn when they are on the job.

Go to any kitchen table in America, outside of a few skyscraper penthouses, and put these bizarre demands up against the trillion dollars of real, practical relief that Republicans wanted to get out the door weeks ago. No family in Middle America is saying: Thank goodness. Thank goodness the Democrats are blocking cash payments to me, money for my kids' schools, and money for vaccines until Manhattan millionaires get a tax cut.

No working people are saying: Thank goodness the Democrats are blocking the next small business rescue plan,

money for testing, and rehiring incentives until Malibu, CA, gets Federal money to keep buying more electric cars, which they wrote to the Congress demanding.

Families aren't saying this. Outside of Speaker PELOSI and Leader SCHUMER, even Washington Democrats aren't saying this.

While the press tries its hardest to praise Speaker PELOSI for “playing hardball,” her own House Democrats are rebelling. They say they are “frustrated” and “angry” that relief is being held up over what they themselves acknowledge is a “political wish list.”

“[T]he HEROES Act went too far,” is another quote.

These are Democrats talking about the Heroes Act.

Even the Speaker's own members are not buying their political spin. They want what Republicans want, what the administration wants, what America's families everywhere want. We need to get an outcome.

The Secretary of the Treasury and the White House chief of staff have given ground. They have put new issues on the table that Democrats wanted. They have worked to find commonality. But the Democrats are barely even pretending to negotiate—barely even pretending. The Speaker's latest spin is that it is some heroic sacrifice to lower her demands from a made-up \$3.5 trillion marker that was never going to become law to an equally made-up \$2.5 trillion marker. She calls this meeting in the middle.

That is not negotiating; that is throwing spaghetti at the wall to see what sticks. People who have serious policy proposals that are fitted to actual needs cannot breezily knock off a trillion here and add a trillion there.

Heck, by the Speaker's logic, they should have just opened with their entire \$93 trillion Green New Deal. Then they could have blamed the President for not meeting them halfway at the cut-rate bargain sum of \$45 trillion.

Come on. In point of fact, the Speaker and the leader have not conceded anything at all. They haven't budged on their absurd demands. They just moved the expiration date a few weeks on the exact same crazy wish list, so the pricetag comes down without moving an inch on the merits.

They have refused Republicans' offer to pass everything that we can agree on. The administration has said: Let's pass things we can agree on right now.

The Republicans don't think that a disputed issue should hold up the most urgent aid for working families, but the answer so far from the Democratic leadership is no. The partisan games continue, so the Nation's pain continues as well.

Laid-off workers and kids and parents and doctors and nurses are waiting for help. Our people are waiting for help. Republicans have been at the table for weeks. We just need seriousness on the other side. American fami-

lies' livelihoods are at stake. American lives are at stake. Democrats must rerun their political calculations and finally—finally—let Congress act.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Virginia.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. Kaine. Mr. President, here we go again. Another day has passed. Nothing has happened—no incremental progress, no compromise. To some it might just be one day, but for too many Americans, another day fighting for your health or how you will pay your rent or how you will feed your kids is a brutal and terrifying thing.

What is one more day to an average American? It might be a day closer to the rent being due without having money to pay it. It might be another day with insufficient unemployment benefits while bills pile up. It might be another day closer to possibly needing SNAP assistance or help from a food bank.

One more day could mean constrained testing supplies don't pick up as many cases of COVID-19, so the carriers can isolate and protect others. One day today means for one of my staffers—it was move-in day for his oldest daughter at college, but because she couldn't get her test result back quickly enough, that experience, which is an exciting one for a young person, could not happen.

These are not simple legislative days while we follow a negotiation strategy. These are days when Americans are struggling and suffering, and we are not responding.

Democrats are here. We are ready to compromise any day. In fact, we have already offered to meet the White House halfway on the size of the relief effort. Our meet-in-the-middle offer was rebuffed Friday, and it was rejected by the White House again yesterday.

I have heard the majority leader today and on other days characterize the Heroes Act in his remarks as a Democratic wish list. So what I would like to do is walk through the Democratic and Republican proposals side by side. At every step I hope listeners will ask themselves: Which of these agendas is oriented to helping Americans through hard times?

The Democratic proposal includes this: continuing expanded unemployment benefits for the duration of this

crisis; cash assistance for struggling families to avoid eviction and foreclosure rather than just delaying bills and piling up debt; sufficient funding and flexibility for State and local governments so that we don't have a second wave of job loss when those governments are forced to cut their budgets, and so they don't have to cut vital programs and lay off first responders during a global health pandemic; sufficient childcare funding both to help working families and to allow childcare providers to reopen so that we can get back to work; providing K-12 schools with the funding they need regardless of how they choose to reopen so that they can effectively educate students; ensuring every American can have access to free treatment for coronavirus; helping families keep food on the table by giving an increase in the SNAP benefit plus additional funding for nutrition programs; continuing support for America's small businesses; protection for the integrity of our elections during a period of uncertainty and fear. Those are the proposals that are contained in the Heroes Act.

The Republican proposals, combining both the HEALS Act—the Senate GOP proposal—and President Trump's Executive orders, include this: \$1.75 billion to keep the FBI headquarters in DC so as to prevent potential hotel competition for the Trump International Hotel; expanded corporate tax writeoffs for business lunches—another top priority for the White House; sharp cuts to unemployment benefits for workers who are suffering and out of work; broad immunity for large corporations even if they are not taking any actions to protect their workers; the effective elimination of State rules, including a rule in Virginia designed to facilitate the safe reopening of businesses and the economy; undermining important protections and enforcement of long-standing civil rights and disability laws; punishing public schools that choose to follow public health guidance but still want to provide their students with an education by reopening virtually; pushing a tax credit program that would make donations to private school scholarships already deductible as charitable contributions—that would make those now preferred over any other charitable contribution, likely draining money away from other charities and hurting government funding, as well; and finally, stopping payroll tax contributions into the Social Security trust fund, creating huge uncertainty for employers and employees but also threatening to undermine the fiscal future of Social Security retirement benefits.

These are elements of the Republican HEALS Act and President Trump's Executive orders.

Equally important is what is not in any of the Republican proposals—either that offered in the Senate or implemented by the President's Executive orders. Food aid for hungry kids and

families? Nothing. Rental assistance? Nothing. Mortgage assistance? Nothing. Aid to the States and localities where Americans live and work? Nothing. Funding to ensure the integrity of the upcoming elections? Nothing.

So I would ask anyone, which of these proposals seems more likely to help Americans who are experiencing hard times? If anyone is in doubt—and I don't think any are—about what kinds of hard times people are in, yesterday I shared some stories from Virginians who have shared them with me, just as they are sharing them with all Senators. Here are a few more of the constituents who have reached out to me.

The owner of a small business with 18 employees in Northern Virginia wrote me: "My business is struggling, my employees are suffering, and we need further assistance." He went on to describe how his business was completely shut down in the crisis. Even now that they are open, they will be operating at less than half their normal revenue for the foreseeable future. Their PPP and EIDL loan funds—they were glad to get them—have run out, and they need Congress to act to prevent the business from shuttering and those 18 jobs from disappearing permanently.

A woman from Henrico County, which is right outside of Richmond, wrote:

As I watch the news, it gets harder and harder. We desperately need help. . . . My son had COVID, he is still struggling with health issues and cannot work.

A woman in Springfield, here in Fairfax County, has been waiting for information that she needs mailed to her so she can get access to unemployment benefits, but the delays in the Postal Service have left her without the benefits she earned and is entitled to. She is a single mother of five and said: "At this point, I am struggling to feed my family."

A woman from Dumfries in Prince William County said:

I'm asking for help with the aid for the unemployed workers like myself that Covid has affected. We are a family of 4 and I have lost my unemployment that we depended on for groceries. My husband's salary covers the bills but I worked for groceries and any extras. As of now I may be able to get \$190 a week from the state if they reevaluate my claim. Please, I'm asking for bipartisan support on an unemployment package that will help families like mine to make it through this pandemic.

Finally, a woman from Alexandria—just across the Potomac—wrote:

I would like to request consideration for more emergency funding for daycare and preschool facilities. My 14 month old little girl attends daycare 5 days per week. Her daycare is wonderful, but it's at risk of closing in the very near future because it only has 1/3 of the minimum number of enrollees that it needs to be able to afford to stay open. I'm an essential worker in healthcare, specifically in pediatric care, and my husband is an essential Department of Defense employee. If I have to stay home with my daughter, I can't take care of the children of others, and I'm honestly very worried about

the prospects of eventually finding a new job, as healthcare facilities are also suffering a large reduction of daily patients. I ask this from the bottom of my heart. Please provide funding for our daycare and preschool facilities, so they can be here for us through and after the pandemic, so parents in Virginia will be able to continue work now or return to work when it is safe to do so.

It is not about politics. It is not about credit. It is about coming through for Americans when they need it. It is the case that, yesterday, Democratic leaders reached out again to the White House and repeated what they had offered last Friday. Let's meet in the middle. Let's meet halfway between the Republican proposals laid out in the HEALS Act and the President's Executive orders and the Democratic proposal passed by a sizeable majority in the House nearly 3 months ago.

That is what Americans want—negotiate, compromise, meet in the middle, and find common ground, just as we did in the CARES Act. The White House response was, no dice. They refused the Democratic proposal to meet halfway. They said that is not going to happen.

We need to get serious. Days continue to tick by as families face hard decisions. Democrats are here, and we are ready. The White House must stop its "no compromise" position to meet the needs of American families. Let's buckle down, make a deal, and get this done. The American people can't afford to wait any longer.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 1:53 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 2:43 p.m., when called to order by the Acting President pro tempore.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, after the Senate adjourns today, we will have our regular pro forma meetings through the end of the State work period.

If the Speaker of the House and the minority leader of the Senate decide to finally let another rescue package move forward for workers and for families, it would take bipartisan consent to meet for legislative business sooner than scheduled. As has been the case,