

The race for treatments and vaccines has gone without the additional funding that Republicans wanted to deliver. Families have gone without the economic relief that Republicans wanted to put in their pockets. And Washington Democrats have just kept trying to run out the clock—run out the clock—until November.

But here is one thing: The Senate majority works for the American people. We fight for American families. We are not going to let Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader kill and bury coronavirus relief behind closed doors without putting every Senator on the record. So we have put together a new, targeted proposal containing several of the most urgent and most popular policies that would help Americans right now. Tomorrow, the whole Senate will vote on it.

It will be a procedural vote. It is not a vote to pass our bill tomorrow, precisely as written. It is a vote for Senators to say whether they want to move forward toward huge amounts of relief for kids, for jobs, for healthcare, or whether they are happier doing absolutely nothing.

That is what every single Senator will decide tomorrow. Do you want to do something—something—or do you want to do nothing?

Democratic leaders know this simple choice will put the spotlight on their partisan antics. They know this vote will expose their obstruction.

Speaker PELOSI and Leader SCHUMER were attacking our new proposal yesterday before they even read it, before it had even come out. I would normally make fun of that, but in this case it makes perfect sense because their position clearly is that they do not want any bipartisan relief whatsoever. They do not want any bipartisan relief whatsoever to reach American families prior to the election.

They didn't even need to see what we were proposing. If it helped working families in any way—in any way—between now and November 3, Speaker PELOSI and Leader SCHUMER knew for sure they opposed it.

Their red herrings and cherry-picked arguments have now given way to total dishonesty. Yesterday, our colleague from New York railed against a provision pertaining to critical supply chains, calling it some sinister giveaway to big business. A provision pertaining to critical supply chains he called a sinister giveaway to big business? That provision is cosponsored by his own Democratic ranking member on the committee. So either the Democratic leader is impugning his own ranking member right along with Republicans or else he simply doesn't know what he is talking about.

Likewise, the junior Senator from Vermont attacked this provision as "corporate welfare," but he himself did not vote against this very provision in committee on two occasions.

They are so desperate to keep working families from getting any help be-

fore the election that some Democrats are now attacking things they previously supported. At this point it is just silly season on the Democratic side. They have run out of excuses not to legislate, and even their cheap shots just backfire in embarrassing ways.

So tomorrow—tomorrow—the Senate will cut through all the noise with one vote. Every Senator will either say they want to move forward, agree where we can, make a law to help people, and keep arguing over our differences later or say they prefer to do absolutely nothing.

Every Senator will vote on this significant package, which secures Federal unemployment benefits, reopens the PPP for a second draw, sends more than \$100 billion to keep kids safe in school, helps parents with childcare, helps families afford expenses or homeschooling, and rebuilds our strategic medical stockpile.

This is not a simplistic argument over big versus small. Republicans want more money for K-12 and college than was in the Democratic bill. We want more money for PPP, which their bill forgot to fund. These are bipartisan priorities that Democrats left behind and Republicans want to take care of.

So tomorrow—tomorrow—American families will learn who wants to make a law for them and who is happiest if they get nothing.

#### 146TH KENTUCKY DERBY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on a completely different matter, on Saturday, the world of sports once again revolved around my hometown of Louisville for the 146th Kentucky Derby. Like so many other events, the coronavirus made this year's derby look a little different.

The race had already been postponed for only the second time in history, and none of the 150,000 spectators who normally fill Churchill Downs were there to sing "My Old Kentucky Home," but the most exciting 2 minutes in sports refused to be defeated.

The derby remains the longest continuously held sporting event, and this year's Labor Day derby proved worth the wait. The winning thoroughbred, Authentic, outlasted a ferocious challenge from the favorite. So I would like to extend the Senate's congratulations to the entire Hall of Fame team.

(The remarks of Mr. MCCONNELL pertaining to the introduction of S. 4547 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### 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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Brett H. Ludwig, of Wisconsin, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Wisconsin.

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

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, the amount of 1984-like doublespeak that comes out of the other side never ceases to amaze, and I guess it is becoming more and more extreme. The Republican leader calls his bill bipartisan? I would remind the leader that "bipartisan" means two parties, Democrats and Republicans. His bill is only a product of the Republican side.

The Republican leader said Democrats are delaying things. Was it Democrats who called for a pause? Was it Democrats who, when COVID was raging, said we had to assess the situation? Oh, no, it was the Republican leader who said those things. Meanwhile, Democrats in the House, supported by Democrats in the Senate, have passed a strong comprehensive bill. We have just been waiting and waiting for our Republican friends to get their act together so they might come close—even near to the moment that we need.

So, after taking a pause on COVID relief for 4 months, finally, finally, finally, Senate Republicans are realizing the damage that their delay has done to our economy and the Nation's health.

Yesterday, Leader MCCONNELL announced that by the end of the week, the Senate would vote on a new slimmed-down version of an already skinny Republican bill. We know what happened here. The leader did nothing for months, but the American people are demanding action. Republican Governors, local officials, hospitals, small businesses—everyone is demanding action. Restaurants, performance stages, and places are demanding action not just of Democrats but of both sides of the aisle.

So the leader had to do something. At first, he tried to cobble together a legislative response, but it failed spectacularly. Leader MCCONNELL was unable to bring it even forward for a vote.

That happened a couple of weeks ago. So, now, because he can't get the votes because, by his own admission, 20 of his own members want no money voted in this crisis—how many Americans think there should be no money at the height of the greatest economic crisis we have had since the Depression, the height of the greatest health crisis we have had since the Spanish pandemic flu? How many Americans think the Federal Government should do nothing? But a large chunk of the Republican caucus evidently seems to, by the Republican leader's own admission.

So he couldn't even get this \$1 trillion bill passed. It was pathetic. So, now, Republicans are going to cut their original inadequate \$1 trillion bill in half in a desperate attempt to find the lowest common denominator among Republicans.

As the economic pain for millions of Americans advances, Senate Republicans are actually moving backward. Of course, up until now, the issue in our negotiations with the White House, where Leader MCCONNELL had been absent, has been about the size and scope of the next relief bill. Democrats passed a \$3 trillion bill in the House over 2 months ago. Why? That is the need of America during this great crisis. We didn't come up with just any numbers. We studied it carefully. We talked to school administrators and asked: What do you need? We talked to hospital administrators and asked: What do you need? We talked to restaurants, and we talked to performance places and asked: What do you need? And we came up with a carefully thought-out bill that met the need.

Our Republican friends didn't meet the need. They came out with what they call a skinny bill at \$1 trillion. We all know why the rightwing ideology that has so gripped so much of the Republican Party doesn't want to spend any money. We, at least, in an offer to compromise, offered to meet our Republican friends in the middle. They balked. No, no, they didn't want to compromise. Their way or no way. And now, instead of improving their offer, Senate Republicans have made it even stingier and even less appropriate for the looming crisis that we have.

I am not sure what kind of negotiating strategy that is, but it sure isn't a serious strategy, and it sure will not be successful. That is why I called it cynical yesterday.

COVID-19 has changed nearly every aspect of American life. The needs in our country are so great. The pain felt by average Americans is severe. Yet the new Republican proposal doesn't include food assistance for people who can't feed their kids, rental assistance for people being kicked out of their homes, or aid to State and local governments desperate not to lay off bus-drivers and sanitation workers and firefighters.

In their new bill, Republicans will not even let the States use existing funds to cover lost revenues. It leaves

out important worker protections. It leaves out hazard pay. It leaves out broadband so desperately needed in rural areas. It leaves out funding for safe elections and help for the census. It shortchanges our healthcare system and education system.

As the school year begins across the country, the new "emaciated" Republican bill basically makes funding for schools contingent upon reopening. So if you are a school that is struggling with the costs of operating remotely, if you are a school that would like to reopen safely but needs help instituting new standards and protections, the GOP bill says "tough luck." Donald Trump comes up with this idea that all schools must reopen, and our Republican colleagues, in obeisance, come up with a proposal that says to the millions of kids who will go to school remotely or in hybrid situations: We are going to make it much harder for you to get help.

That is to say nothing about the fact that the new Republican COVID bill is laden with poison pills designed to make its passage impossible. Someone looking at this would say: If they want to come to a compromise, why would they put poison pills in the bill that they know are nonstarters to getting bipartisan compromise? Is it because they really don't want a bill but a political issue—one that would ultimately backfire on them, I believe. But they have done it.

There is broad corporate immunity that my colleague in Illinois has so focused on—an immunity provision that would protect corporations that put their workers in harm's way from legal liability. And evidently to get a handful of hard-right Senators who didn't want to spend any money, they added a partisan school choice program long sought by Secretary DeVos—hardly a friend of public education.

Republicans call their new bill "targeted," but by almost every measure, it misses the mark. It is impossible to look at the new GOP proposal as a serious effort to passing a law. It is impossible to look at this GOP proposal and not wonder: Do our Republican friends see the damage in America? Are they still intent on playing these same games? Are they still trying to fool the American people by calling the harshly partisan proposal bipartisan, as the leader just did?

If Republicans were serious about achieving a result, they would have joined negotiations with Speaker PELOSI, me, and the White House. If Leader MCCONNELL was so eager to get something done, why wasn't he at the table for weeks? Republicans could have encouraged the White House to improve their offer, to meet us in the middle, to break the logjam. Where were the Republican Senators? I haven't heard a voice speak out and say we should meet in the middle. They are all so afraid of what Donald Trump might say, I suppose.

Leader MCCONNELL, instead, crafted a partisan bill—with no input from

Democrats—even leaner and meaner than the previous Republican proposal and would rush it to the floor 2 days after releasing it. This is one of the most cynical moves by any leader I have ever seen. This isn't about making law or working in good faith with the other party. Leader MCCONNELL isn't searching for bipartisan progress. He seems to be looking for political cover. It will not pass on Thursday, and we will be right back where we are today, needing our Republican colleagues to understand the gravity of this situation in our country and to work with us on a bill that actually makes some sense and deals with the magnitude of this awful crisis.

#### SAVE OUR STAGES ACT

Madam President, now a final matter. The new Republican bill is silent on a whole host of crucial issues, including a number of items that affect small businesses.

Over the State work period, I visited several independent music and theater venues that have struggled during the COVID-19 pandemic. Live venues were some of the first to close, and they will be the last to open up. Many of them are already on the brink of collapse. There is the rent, the utilities, and an entire year without revenue.

Live venues—by definition, people are close together, so they couldn't continue during COVID, and they have to wait until the very end. But they are so important to so many communities—urban, suburban, and rural.

Unfortunately, according to one survey, 90 percent of independent venues will have to close permanently without Federal funding. What an incredible shame that would be. These are indie music venues, jazz clubs, symphony orchestra halls, comedy clubs, and even Broadway, which is made up of dozens of small theaters that employ thousands of workers, from the box office to the backstage. These independent venues provide 75 percent of all artists' income, and they drive economic activity within our communities at restaurants, hotels, stores, and other establishments.

But what we risk if these venues close permanently isn't purely economic, although it is so important. I was in Albany and Syracuse yesterday. It is estimated that the arts are one of the top five employers in both of those cities. We can't afford to let this happen. Economically, we will lose thousands and thousands of jobs. Cities will lose city downtowns, and rural areas, as well, will lose their vitality.

The risk, if these venues close permanently, is not just economic. They are the very fabric of our society, which has been stretched to the breaking point by this crisis. Once this is all over, we will need these venues and the passionate, inspiring, artistic work that they help make possible as we come together again and try to make sense of this incredibly difficult moment in our history.

We have a bipartisan bill—Save Our Stages Act—that would create a new