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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, September 11, 2020, at 1 p.m.

Senate

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2020

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, who sits on a lofty throne, we acknowledge Your sovereignty over our Nation and world. Keep us from becoming so desensitized to falsehoods that we abort Your plan for our lives.

Lord, we are unworthy to approach Your throne, for we are merely sinners saved by Your loving grace. Remove our guilt and forgive our sins. May we respond to Your forgiveness by obeying Your command for us to pray for our Nation.

Lord, use our Senators today as messengers of truth, unity, and peace. Inspire them to stand for right regardless of the consequences.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute in morning business.

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Today, the Senate will vote on moving forward with relief for Americans. That relief is necessary because of COVID-19.

The bill contains new funds for testing and contact tracing, aid for schools and colleges to keep our kids safe, and it also includes childcare assistance. It has more money for developing the coronavirus vaccine and treatments, funding for the Postal Service, and help for farmers. It allows for small businesses to access more Paycheck Protection Program funds with more flexibility and provides for enhanced unemployment benefits.

Now, surely these are items we can all agree on and ought to agree on right now. We know how to work together to produce results for Americans. We saw that in March when we successfully passed the CARES Act. That is a good model to follow now.

Back in March, Republicans in the Senate proposed a framework, then worked across party lines through the relevant committees to produce a consensus product that received overwhelming support in the Senate. I was glad to lead the bipartisan negotiations on the part of the Senate Finance Committee for that CARES package and have been standing ready to repeat the process if Democratic leaders would just agree to agree. Why can't we repeat the same process now?

Democrats seem to think that they can hold out until Republicans either agree to their partisan wishes or Republicans take the blame for the lack of relief. If the Democrats are right, it would be a partisan win for their party,

but at the same time, it would be a tremendous loss for the American people.

Let's agree to move forward like we did last March.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11

Mr. MCCONNELL. Nineteen years ago tomorrow, thousands of our fellow Americans were murdered by terrorists. National landmarks were burning. Brave first responders in New York City, Arlington, and Pennsylvania rushed into mortal danger, putting their lives on the line to save strangers.

As the dust settled and 3,000 American families grieved their loved ones far before their time, we quickly saw there was no going back. The old world we had woken up to that Tuesday morning was gone.

We had not gone overseas in search of these monsters. These monsters came to us. These enemies would not leave our Nation alone if we declined to confront them, so as we reflect on this anniversary tomorrow, we will remember the thousands of innocent Americans who died that day and the brave servicemen and women who went on to pay the ultimate sacrifice to do justice and to prevent more attacks.

My fellow Kentuckians and I cannot be prouder of the heroes stationed on

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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our soil who have deployed throughout the War on Terror. The special operators of the 160th, the Night Stalkers, based at Fort Campbell, KY, handled the very first airborne insertion of Army troops in mid-October—a dangerous fight over the Hindu Kush mountains. The soldiers they carried were from the famed 5th Special Forces Group, also based at Fort Campbell, who formed the tip of the spear to unleash the might of America on the terrorists and their Taliban hosts. The famous 101st Airborne, also at Fort Campbell, became the first conventional unit on the ground just days later.

Fast-forward a decade, and the Night Stalkers were helicoptering over Afghanistan yet again. They inserted and extracted SEAL Team Six the night we took Osama bin Laden off the battlefield.

Thousands more servicemembers deployed from Kentucky's Fort Knox and Fort Campbell during the War on Terror, and more than 18,000 soldiers and airmen from the Kentucky National Guard had been mobilized to defend our Nation.

Fighting by our side for nearly 20 years now have been our friends and NATO allies. America's friends invoked article 5 right away and have fought alongside us to defeat this global threat.

That dark day occasioned brave contributions from so many—from the firefighters who sprinted through the smoke to the citizens who donated blood and flew our flag, to the young men and women who are stationed thousands of miles from home right now to help our Nation project power and protect our homeland.

We did what Americans do. We stayed strong. We stuck together. We rolled up our sleeves, and we rebuilt. Some rebuilt their lives. Others rebuilt buildings. Some put on the uniform and rebuilt peace and security with their own hands.

May we never fail to honor them, and may we never tire of the toughness, vigilance, and persistence it has taken—and will continue to take—to make our pledge, “Never Again,” a reality.

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Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on an entirely different matter, Congress has spent months talking—talking—about whether to give the American people more relief as they continue grappling with this pandemic.

Today we are going to vote.

Today we are going to vote. Every Senator will be counted. Should we move forward with the floor process to deliver hundreds of billions of dollars more for kids, jobs, and healthcare? Should we at least vote to move forward and have this debate out in the open? Or do our Democratic colleagues prefer to hide behind closed doors and refuse to help families before the election?

Well, we will find out in a couple of hours.

Republicans have tried repeatedly to build on the CARES Act and get more help out the door to American families. Democrats have blocked us at every turn. They have invented different excuses each time.

A few months ago, Speaker PELOSI wrote a massive multitrillion-dollar liberal wish list that even her own House Democratic Members said would never become law.

“The HEROES Act went too far.” A “political wish list.” These are quotes from House Democrats.

But in July, when the Senate Republicans put forward a serious offer, Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader said they would not even talk—not even talk—unless we started with that unserious bill. No help for families unless they got to pass the absurd bill their own Democratic Members have ridiculed.

So, in August, Republicans tried something else. We proposed breaking off some of the most urgent, most bipartisan policies and agreeing wherever we could: unemployment insurance, the Paycheck Protection Program. But Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader blocked that too. They said they didn't want to do anything “piece-meal.” “Piecemeal,” they said.

Then, just a few weeks later, Speaker PELOSI completely contradicted herself and rushed back to Washington to pass a total piecemeal bill that only helped the Postal Service and did nothing for working families—contradiction after contradiction, excuse after excuse, while working families have suffered and waited and wondered whether Washington Democrats really care more about hurting President Trump than helping them through this crisis.

My Democratic colleagues should stand up and tell the American people which elements of our multihundred-billion-dollar proposal they actually oppose.

Let me say that again. They should stand up and tell the American people which parts of the proposal we will vote on later today that they are actually against.

Today, we are going to vote to extend the Federal unemployment insurance. Will Democrats vote against that?

Thanks to Senator COLLINS and Chairman RUBIO, we are going to vote on a whole second round of the PPP for hard-hit businesses. Are the Democrats against that?

Thanks to colleagues such as Senators ERNST, DAINES, GARDNER, and SULLIVAN, we will be voting on help for small businesses like farms and fisheries. Thanks to Senator CORNYN, we will be voting on commonsense legal protections that universities and non-profits have been asking for. Who are the Democrats excited to vote against—the farmers or the university presidents?

Thanks to Chairman ALEXANDER and Senator BLUNT, we are going to vote on

an incredibly robust package for education and healthcare to get kids back in school safely and then defeat this virus through science. We will be voting on \$105 billion for education, more than House Democrats put on their bill; billions on testing and tracing; and even more support for vaccines.

Thanks to a number of our colleagues, including Senators ERNST and LOEFFLER, there is new support for childcare, plus other arrangements like homeschooling, thanks to Senator CRUZ.

Are Democrats going to vote against childcare and education during a pandemic because they are afraid the Republicans might get some credit? Really? They are going to vote against finding and distributing vaccines because they are afraid the breakthrough that our Nation is praying for might possibly help President Trump?

These are the policies that every one of us will be voting on in a couple of hours—these and many more.

Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader can keep up their frantic political spin. They can keep trying to make this an abstract argument over leverage or an infinite set of things that aren't in the bill or whether the White House Chief of Staff has been polite to them or whatever new excuse they will settle on today. But none of that is what we are going to vote on. We are going to vote on policy.

Today, every Senator will either say they want to send families the relief we can agree to or they can send families nothing—nothing.

Reporters asked the Democratic leader yesterday if his stonewalling was making the perfect the enemy of the good. He replied—listen to this—“Republicans are the enemy of the good.” “Republicans are the enemy.” That is what he said.

We have all heard the saying that a gaffe is when a politician accidentally says what he really thinks. That is a Washington gaffe, when a politician actually says what he really thinks. Well, the Democratic leader just told us how poisonous his thinking has become.

The Americans we represent, however they vote, know that Republicans aren't our enemies and Democrats aren't our enemies. The coronavirus is the enemy. The coronavirus is the enemy.

My home State just passed a sad milestone yesterday. More than 1,000 Kentuckians have lost their lives to COVID-19. These families I represent are not burying their loved ones because Republicans or Democrats are the enemy. They are burying their loved ones because of this virus. That is what we are fighting. That is what families are dealing with. We are not each other's enemies. We are all in this together, just like we were back in March and April.

So, today, every Senator is going to vote. Every Senator is going to vote. Senators who share the Democratic leader's toxic attitude, who think the