

happened on COVID 3. It happened on COVID 3.5. I pray and plead, for the sake of our country and the people who are suffering, that it will happen again and that Republicans, once they see they can't pass this emaciated, terribly insufficient, and poison-pill-pocked proposal, will start negotiating in reality with us—something they have not done as of yet.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Madam President, now on President Trump, yesterday it was reported that, in taped interviews with Bob Woodward, President Trump acknowledged that he knew the danger posed by COVID-19 way back in February but he deliberately—deliberately—downplayed the threat to the American people. We now know that the President wasn't ill-informed. He wasn't being overly optimistic. He was lying to the American people. He was deliberately downplaying the virus to the American people at a time when early and forceful action could have saved so many lives.

Look, when the house is on fire—a five-alarm fire—you have an obligation to let people know. If you don't, they are going to burn, and they are going to die.

When we look at the rest of the world and see why they are doing better than we are in fighting this disease, the reason is simple: They had some leadership. We have had none from the White House—none. We have had lying. We have had ignoring the problem. We have had misleading the American people but no leadership at a time when we desperately need it.

Other leaders around the world were clear about science. They faced up to the problem and worked hard to solve it. They instituted policies to test, trace, and isolate. We had a President who simply lied about the dangers of the disease and suggested that Americans inject bleach. Other leaders took responsibility and ownership. We had a President who said: "It is what it is." In the annals of history, this will be one of the five greatest examples of lack of leadership in American history.

President Trump, the history books are not going to regard you kindly. They are not going to regard you kindly.

The President is coming up with great excuses now for his perfidious lies. This time, he said he didn't want to tell the truth about COVID because it might cause panic. Really? Is this the same President who is busy panicking America right now, telling women in the suburbs that their safety is at risk when the suburbs are not at risk at all? Is this the same President who invented a caravan of migrants in an attempt to panic Americans before the last election? This President always uses panic as a tool when he thinks it serves his interest, so the idea that he did it because he didn't want to panic Americans does not ring true. It seems like an *ex post facto* excuse for the President's perfidious lies.

President Trump doesn't mind panicking people when it serves his interest. What is worse is that he will not tell the truth when it hurts his interest, even if lives are at stake.

The President's comments in this interview were despicable. It should serve as a warning to all Americans about who this man is and his total, complete abject failure to lead.

(Mr. SCOTT of Florida assumed the Chair.)

TRANSIT

Mr. President, finally, on transit, COVID-19 has changed nearly every aspect of American life, but Senate Republicans and the White House only want to address the barest sliver of the problems in our country, so this week I have been pointing out many of the things that the Republican proposal leaves out.

Yesterday, I spoke about the plight of live venues and the need to save that essential part of our culture and our economy. Today I want to address another topic that has received far too little attention from the Senate Republicans: transit.

Public transportation systems are the lifeblood of great American cities. Regional networks connect workers to jobs and consumers and businesses. As anyone can imagine, during the pandemic, while transit authorities like the MTA have continued round-the-clock operations to serve the people, ridership on public transportation has plummeted, leaving them in a state of crisis. God forbid if public transportation were forced to shutter or drastically reduce operations, like on Long Island, where they rely on the Long Island Rail Road. The damage to regional economies and to the national economy would be severe. But there is not a penny—not one single penny—in the Republican bill to help public transit systems or even help State and local governments, which fund a lot of the transit systems—not a penny.

My Republican friends seem to look at this crisis through a narrow lens. Some of my colleagues have criticized Democrats for the outrageous idea of wanting to help our State governments and the essential public services they provide.

I have news for our colleagues. These regional transit systems are mission critical to the national economy. It is not just a New York problem or a New Jersey problem or an Illinois problem, it is a national crisis.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority alone carries about 40 percent of the Nation's transit riders and drives as much as 10 percent of the national GDP—10 percent. The facts argue for heavy investment in public transportation systems to stanch the bleeding and jump-start the economy when the pandemic wanes. The lack of investment in transit systems in the Republican legislation is unacceptable.

ELECTION SECURITY

Mr. President, finally, according to a whistleblower complaint filed by a

former senior official in the Office of Intelligence and Analysis at the Department of Homeland Security, political leaders at DHS told him to refrain from sharing reports about Putin's efforts to interfere with our elections because "they make the President look bad." And this DHS whistleblower goes on to allege a broader pattern by Trump and his lieutenants of politicizing and misrepresenting intelligence, altering the information to fit the President's way of thinking, what the President thinks makes him look good.

We know this President doesn't like to hear the truth. He literally can't handle it. But what is even more alarming is that former DNI Director Dan Coats, according to Bob Woodward's new book, could not shake his "deep suspicions" that Vladimir Putin "had something" on the President.

Many Americans believe what Coats said; that the reason Donald Trump bows down in obeisance to Putin is that Putin knows something that the President doesn't want made public.

That is how egregious the pattern of President Trump's behavior has been. It cries out for an explanation, and there is no logical one. There is no honorable one. President Trump's pattern of downplaying the threat from Putin, placating the dictator, and pursuing policies that have long been the goal of Moscow asks an enormous question: What does President Putin know that President Trump is so afraid of?

Here is what needs to happen. Before we leave for the election, there has to be an all-Senators briefing on the threat from Putin to our election. Every Senator—Democratic, Republican, liberal, conservative, North, South, East, and West—has an obligation to our constituents and the country we all love to find out what exactly Putin is up to.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. DURBIN. I want to thank my colleague from New York for his comments this morning. He is right. We have seen this play before. We know how it ends. Senator McCONNELL, the Republican leader, comes to the floor and proclaims that his latest creation is bipartisan; the Democrats have a choice to vote yes or no; take it or leave it; we are done.

We have been through this over and over again. That is not how Congress or human activity works. We have a split government between Democrats and Republicans. When we sit down together and compromise, good things can happen. We proved it March 26. The vote was 96 to 0 for the CARES Act, a \$3 trillion bill early on to address the coronavirus pandemic and to deal with the serious challenges to our economy.

Thank goodness we did it. It gave \$600 a week in additional Federal supplements and unemployment to families who were facing layoffs and closures of their businesses. We helped