

government, you win some and you lose some. While it is no fun when you lose, that is how things sometimes go in a democracy. Have Republicans been enthusiastic when Democrat Presidents have had nominees confirmed to the Supreme Court? No, but have Republicans suggested that Democrat Supreme Court Justices are illegitimate? Have we suggested that the proper response to a Democrat Supreme Court nominee is to pack the Supreme Court with additional Republican Justices to get a rubberstamp for Republican priorities? No, of course not.

While we may not like it when Democrats are in charge, we know that Democrat-run government is legitimate, just as Republican-run government is legitimate. It has become clear over the past few years—especially over the past few days—that Democrats think government is legitimate only when they are in charge. So Democrats are accusing Republicans of undermining our institutions by fulfilling our constitutional role because that is exactly what we are doing: fulfilling our constitutional role.

Let's be very clear about that. Republicans are suggesting that we take up a Supreme Court nominee duly nominated by a duly elected President and confirm that nominee in accord with our constitutional advice and consent role.

Democrats are free to think that Republicans should not consider this nominee, but it is absolutely indisputable that Republicans and the President are doing nothing more than carrying out a legitimate constitutional prerogative.

What Democrats are doing, on the other hand, is trying to ensure that only one party has a say in our government—what some might call tyranny—and threatening retribution for the exercise of legitimate constitutional prerogatives. That does pose a danger to our institutions.

Take the Supreme Court. A year ago, several Democrats warned that the Court's nonpartisan reputation was in jeopardy. Their argument was that the Court would look partisan if it did continue with a case the Democrats didn't like. What on Earth do Democrats think will happen to the Court's reputation if they pack the Court with additional Democrats to rubberstamp their policies? Do they really think Americans are going to see the Supreme Court as legitimate once it has been hijacked for partisan Democratic purposes?

If you believe in our system of government, you have to believe that all Americans—not just those who agree with you—have a right to have a voice in the government. You are free to vehemently disagree with 50 percent of your fellow Americans. You are free to dislike it when your party is not in charge. You are free to fight fiercely for the policies and candidates you believe in. But what you cannot do without undermining our entire system is

suggest that government is legitimate only when your party is in charge.

If Democrats continue along this dangerous trajectory, if they continue to try to delegitimize the actions of a duly elected Senate majority and a duly elected President, they are the ones who will put our entire system at risk.

If anyone wonders for a moment whether Democrats are advocating a principled position—if perhaps Democrats really think it would be best for our country to eliminate the legislative filibuster Democrats have used so often or to expand the Supreme Court—one can simply ask whether Democrats will continue to advocate for these positions if President Trump is reelected and Republicans retain control of the Senate. Think about that one. I think everyone here knows what the answer to that question is, and the answer is no.

As I suggested, Democrats' threats are not going to stop Republicans from carrying out our constitutional role in considering the President's nominee. One of the principle reasons that many GOP Senators, myself included, ran for office in the first place was to confirm principled judges to our courts—judges who understand that their role is to interpret the law, not make the law.

While many of my Democrat colleagues would like the courts to impose their policies when they can't push them through Congress, Republicans know that legislation should come from Congress and not from the courts. The job of judges is to interpret the law as it is written, not to oppose Democrat or Republican policies from the bench.

My colleagues and I were elected and reelected, in part, because of our commitment to confirming judges who would uphold the Constitution and the rule of law. We have followed through on that commitment over the past 4 years, and we are going to keep following through by voting on the President's nominee.

Democrats can bluster. They can threaten. They can throw temper tantrums. But we will keep doing what we were sent here to do.

I yield the floor.

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

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

AGRICULTURE

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, we are here to talk about agriculture. We are here to talk about those great farmers and ranchers who feed this country and feed the world.

You know, when we talk about good farm policy, we are talking about something that benefits every single

American every single day because our farmers and ranchers produce the highest quality, lowest cost food supply in the history of the world that benefits every single American every single day. That is just how important it is. How could we be reminded even more so right now than during this COVID pandemic of that abundant, safe, wonderful food supply that we have every day thanks to our farmers and ranchers, and there is so much that goes into it.

As the Presiding Officer well knows, with Nebraska as his State and its being a big part of the incredible ag production in this country—as a matter of fact, there could be a little rivalry here with his contiguous State to the north in terms of cattle production or something like that—this is something that touches everybody every day and is so important.

It is not just those farmers and ranchers who produce that food every day; it is the whole supply chain that has to work. Remember, that food supply has to be safe every day, not only tasty and affordable and abundant, and that is what we are talking about. This has become a big, big issue in the continuing resolution that we are working on right now in that the way we are funding the coronavirus food assistance programs, in part, is with the direct funding that we secured in the CARES Act and also from what they call the CCC, the Commodity Credit Corporation. With regard to the farm bill—the bipartisan farm bill that has incredibly strong support on both sides of the aisle in this body and the House—many of its very key programs are funded by the Commodity Credit Corporation. We put about \$30 billion a year into that fund every year to make sure that those programs are funded to support our farmers and ranchers.

That was not in the original House version that was going to be filed, so a group of Senators from ag States came together last week and had a colloquy in this body. They immediately went to work with our friends in the House who are also strong supporters of agriculture and now the continuing resolution that has passed the House overwhelmingly, which we will be taking up, has that key funding in it.

So we are really here to, once again, emphasize the importance of making sure we fund these farm programs, to make sure that we fund them in a timely way, and, again, to point out very clearly that this is funding that is being used expressly the way it was authorized to be used both in the overwhelmingly bipartisan farm bill we passed—the 5-year farm bill—but also in the CARES Act, in which we secured additional funding. Now the funding that is included in the continuing resolution is exactly that funding that we put out there every year to make sure this farm bill is provided on time.

It could not be more important than this year, when not only are our farmers and ranchers fighting COVID but

when they are fighting low commodity prices, challenges in the world of trade in their being targeted by China, fighting challenges of tough weather, and on top of that, COVID. So, again, we have to be there for them.

I thank the Members of the Senate and the House who worked very hard on this and the farm group, and I am going to kind of run through this whole roster here in a minute.

Before I do that, I turn to the senior Senator from South Dakota—our whip here in the Senate and somebody who has worked on behalf of agriculture his whole life—and ask him for a few of his comments.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I say to my colleague from North Dakota how much we appreciate his leadership. He is a relentless advocate for the farmers and ranchers of North Dakota and across this country. We share a border, but we also have a lot of commonality in the people whom we represent. They are hard-working people who work from dawn to dusk to feed not only this country but the world.

It has been no easy task being in agriculture during these last few years for lots of reasons, as my colleague from North Dakota has pointed out, whether it be from, of course, most recently, COVID, but also from chronically low and depressed commodity prices, coupled with bad weather, coupled with trade disputes, and difficulties with markets here and around the world. Farmers and ranchers have had a tough and difficult road these past few years, so it is critically important that we continue to be there for them.

As my colleague from North Dakota pointed out, there was a concern because what we had heard initially would be in the continuing resolution that was coming over from the House—that will fund the government and that we will pass, hopefully, later this week in the Senate—was not going to include funding for agriculture and for all of those programs that keep ag running that we authorized in the farm bill.

A key Member of the House Agriculture Committee, Senator BOOZMAN, of Arkansas, who is also a key member of that committee—in fact, he is somebody we hope to be the next chairman of that committee—and the current chairman of our authorizing committee, Senator ROBERTS, of Kansas, who, I think, will be down here in just a few minutes, all played an important role, along with the ag community. All of the organizations that Senator HOEVEN is going to talk about engaged right away when they realized what was happening, and we were able to work together to solve that.

Now we will consider on the floor of the Senate the continuing resolution to fund the government that does include funding for the Commodity Credit Corporation, which provides the funds that keep all of those agricultural programs that we authorize when we do a farm bill. The last farm bill

was in 2018, and we were all involved with that. It would keep all of those programs funded, and that is critically important. It has never been more important than it is right now in our coming out of the pandemic. Food security is an absolutely essential priority. It should be for our country, and it certainly should be for the Members of Congress in both the House and the Senate.

I thank my colleague Senator HOEVEN. As I said, he is a strong, strong voice for our agricultural producers. When he and I and those from Arkansas and Kansas and Nebraska—those of us from farm country—work together and put together coalitions at times like this, it is only due to that advocacy we have heard from Senator HOEVEN and others that has enabled us to be successful.

I am glad that we have gotten the right outcome here, and it is something to celebrate. Obviously, our farmers and ranchers across the country are going to be, I think, enormously grateful that we have been able to get this problem resolved.

I thank the Senator for his leadership, and I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on those issues that are important in farm country that will help our farmers and ranchers not only survive but, hopefully, prosper into the future.

Mr. HOEVEN. I thank the Senate's majority whip for all of the work he has done.

Again, he works for farmers day in and day out. He comes from South Dakota, which is a strong farming and big ranching State. He was instrumental in this effort, not only by his joining us last week in the colloquy but then by engaging in the negotiations as part of our leadership time, along with our majority leader, who held fast on this.

I have to tell you that, as we negotiated back and forth with the House, our leadership—Senator MCCONNELL, Senator THUNE, and others—held strong in saying: No, this is something that must be in the continuing resolution. Also, the administration—the President and the White House—was involved in this negotiation and held fast on this as well.

This is one of the last pieces of the puzzle to come into place, but it is so very important that we have gotten it. As I say, we had seven Senators down on the floor last week who were talking about it, and those seven Senators were led by our Ag chairman, and I will ask him to make a few comments as well.

Again, let me thank those other Senators who have joined and will join us—Senator THUNE, from whom you just heard; Senator BOOZMAN, from whom you will hear in just a minute; Senator ERNST, of Iowa; Senator FISCHER, of Nebraska; and Senator HYDE-SMITH, of Mississippi. All have strong ag backgrounds. I mean, they are people who not only work on behalf of agriculture but who are involved in agri-

culture. They are not just here, advocating for it—they live it. It is a great group.

They have also reached out to so many in the House, to the farm groups, to the commodity groups, and to the ag groups, which I will talk a little bit more about later.

Let me turn to our Ag chairman, who, though still a relatively young man, has been in the House and the Senate for many years and has always been a tireless advocate for agriculture. He is a marine—once a marine always a marine. *Semper Fi*. He brings that attitude—that marine, you know, “never turn back and never let up” attitude—and makes sure that he does everything he can on behalf of our farmers and ranchers.

I yield to the chairman.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. I thank the distinguished Senator for his comments. I appreciate the shout-out for the U.S. Marine Corps and to all of us who are marines.

The Marine Corps taught me one thing, and that was that I could always do more than I thought I could. This is a good example of what happens when we work together as a team—when we work with our colleagues across the aisle—when we see a real problem that has come up.

This was a situation for which I wanted to express my gratitude to all of the Members who joined together to provide certainty and predictability. This is what we sold the farm bill on—certainty and predictability. We had a situation that we faced, and it was really difficult to understand how this came about, but that is not the news today. The news today is good news in that we reached a compromise and found agreement to replenish the CCC, the Commodity Credit Corporation, in the continuing resolution, absent some of the barbed wire that was in there.

I especially want to thank more than 40 agriculture organizations, and I have the letter right here. I know both Senators who are in attendance here, as well as Senator THUNE and everybody concerned, are aware of it. It is to Majority Leader MCCONNELL, Speaker PELOSI, Leader SCHUMER, and Leader MCCARTHY. It is from 47 different farm organizations and commodity groups that speak for, I think, virtually every farmer, rancher, and grower in the country. So I give thanks to the 47.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed at this point in the RECORD this letter, dated September 15, 2020, from 47 farm organizations and commodity groups.

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

SEPTEMBER 15, 2020.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Hon. CHARLES SCHUMER,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL, SPEAKER PELOSI, LEADER SCHUMER AND LEADER MCCARTHY: As Congress assembles a continuing resolution to extend government funding, we respectfully ask that you provide the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) with the resources necessary to continue assisting American farmers and ranchers. To that end, reimbursement for the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) must be included in any measure to keep government operating past the current fiscal year.

For decades, CCC has been regularly replenished to fund programs integral to the farm safety net that Congress has worked tirelessly to craft. Producers count on programs like Agriculture Risk Coverage, Price Loss Coverage, Dairy Margin Coverage, Marketing Assistance Loans, conservation programs, and many others as they provide food, fuel and fiber for our nation. Without immediate CCC reimbursement, payments and programs would be significantly delayed, jeopardizing operations across the country.

More than ever, farmers and ranchers need the certainty and support provided by farm programs. Low commodity prices, unjustified retaliatory tariffs, natural disasters, and a global pandemic have placed a tremendous burden on farm country. USDA's most recent farm income projections forecast that cash receipts will be at their lowest level in more than a decade. Coupled with rising farm debt and a decrease in working capital, producers face challenges not experienced in decades.

As the industry continues to endure hardships during this unprecedented time, we urge you to include CCC reimbursement in a continuing resolution. Thank you for your consideration and continued efforts on behalf of American agriculture.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Retailers Association, Amcot, American Agri-Women, American Cotton Producers, American Cotton Shippers Association, American Dairy Coalition, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Pulse Association, American Sheep Industry Association, American Soybean Association.

American Sugar Alliance, Association of Equipment Manufacturers, Cotton Growers Warehouse Association, Cotton Warehouse Association of America, Crop Insurance Professionals Association, National Association of Wheat Growers, National Barley Growers Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Corn Growers Association, National Cotton Council.

National Cotton Ginners Association, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, National Farmers Union, National Milk Producers Federation, National Sorghum Producers, National Sunflower Association, Panhandle Peanut Growers Association, Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., Produce Marketing Association, Rural & Agriculture Council of America.

Society of American Florists, Southeastern Cotton Ginners Association, Southern Cotton Growers, Southwest Council of Agribusiness, U.S. Canola Association, U.S. Cattlemen's Association, United Egg Producers, United States Peanut Federation, US Rice Producers Association, USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council, USA Rice, Western Peanut Growers Association.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, if we had not done this, it would have resulted in delays in the 2018 farm bill programs—the one that we passed here with 87 votes—and the ability farmers would have with the risk management tools.

I would just simply point out that no matter what they grow or where they live, farmers, ranchers, and growers have done their part to ensure that our Nation's food, fiber, and fuel supplies continue without disruption during these unprecedented times. They are counting on the Department of Agriculture—and, for that matter, the Congress—to deliver a range of agriculture, nutrition, conservation, and forestry programs.

More than 50 of these programs—here is the list—were in danger because of the uncertainty in replenishing the CCC funding and then due to some of the add-ons with regard to policy being difficult to understand. Well, they are easy to understand, but it is bad policy, bad precedent.

We have put the Secretary of Agriculture in a very bad position in that he has announced the specifics of this program. I would urge all of my colleagues—more especially my colleagues across the aisle who have expressed great concern as to what is in this latest program and what isn't—to get on the phone, and I will get on the phone with the Secretary. I know that Senator BOOZMAN and Senator HOEVEN will do the same. We all have concerns as to how this is going to work, and that has been true with all of the programs prior to this one. That is the way to express our concern with regard to getting something done.

I do want to point out that my colleagues across the aisle, under the banner of nutrition programs—the SNAP program in particular, school lunches, et cetera—did point out that we had some real deficiencies with regard to keeping our commitment to these programs, more especially with COVID-19. I understand that, so that was included. That is really what we are all about here—working in a bipartisan fashion on behalf of farmers, ranchers, and growers in agriculture. That is what we have always done on the committee.

I thank my distinguished ranking member, and I thank everybody who brought this thing together.

As the chairman of this committee, we were successful. As I indicated, in a bipartisan manner, we—87 Members of this Chamber—voted in favor of this legislation. These were some of the programs that were threatened: price loss coverage, agriculture risk coverage, and marketing assistance loans. If you just go down the list of everything farmers were depending on, all of a sudden, it was up in the air. Why that was true I am not quite sure, but this shows the extent of the damage that could have been done with the original request in the CR without the CCC funding.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed at this point in the RECORD a list of these programs that were in danger.

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

PROGRAMS FUNDED THROUGH CCC

Price Loss Coverage; Agriculture Risk Coverage—County; Agriculture Risk Coverage—Individual; Marketing Assistance Loans; Economic Adjustment Assistance for Upland Cotton; ELS Cotton; Payment Limitations and Actively Engaged (commodity certs, separate peanut payment limit, marketing loan; Sugar Loans; Electronic Warehouse Receipts; Dairy Margin Coverage.

Dairy Indemnity Payment Programs; Milk Donation Program; Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program; Feedstock Flexibility Program; Biofuels Infrastructure Program; Biobased Market Program; Bio-refinery Assistance Program; Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels; Rural Energy for America Program; Export Credit Guarantee Program.

Agriculture Trade Promotion Program (Market Access; Program, Foreign Market Development Program, Emerging Markets Program, Technical Assistance for Conservation Reserve Program; Agricultural Conservation Easement Program; Conservation Stewardship Program; Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program; Environmental Quality Incentives Program; Regional Conservation Partnership Program; Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Livestock Forage Disaster Program; Livestock Indemnity Program; Tree Assistance Program.

Facility Guarantee Program; Food for Progress Program; Quality Samples Program; The Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust; Wool Apparel Manufacturers Trust Fund; Pima Cotton Trust Fund; Citrus Trust Fund; APHIS efforts for emergency plant and animal disease; Local Agriculture Market Program; Organic Production and Market Data Initiatives.

Organic Agriculture Research and Extension; Small Watershed Rehabilitation; Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot; The Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program; Specialty Crop Block Grant Program; Animal Disease Prevention and Management Program; Wool Research and Promotion; Farming Opportunities Training and Outreach; Beginning; Farmer and Rancher Development Grant Program; Emergency Food Assistance Program; Food for Peace Program.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, finding a bipartisan solution to replenish the CCC and to provide much needed certainty and predictability for all reasons, all crops, all farmers, and all ranchers, I, again, appreciate the efforts of my colleagues and those who represent them—the Nation's farmers, ranchers, growers, rural stakeholders, everybody in rural and small-town America, and their lenders, who could not believe what we were about to face with pulling out the CCC funds with regards to the CR, or the continuing resolution, to keep our government running and avoid a government shutdown.

So this agreement, the continuing resolution, represents a good step, a good bipartisan step. I really appreciate that, although I must say we didn't have to go down this road.

There is a saying we have in Kansas that there are a lot cactus in the world. We don't have to sit on every doggone one of them. And, boy, we sat on this one, and we sat on it too long.

I want thank the staff, especially the Agriculture Committee staff, representing all of our Members on the Ag Committee. They did tremendous work, making sure the right policy was there, making sure that at least the CCC was operating with the funds that they need to operate during the middle of COVID-19, and, again, on behalf of all of agriculture.

So I want to again thank Senator HOEVEN for holding this discussion.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, before Chairman ROBERTS leaves, I just wanted to come down and lend my voice to him and Senators BOOZMAN, THUNE, and HOEVEN, and to Chairman ROBERTS and his staff for his work, and the Presiding Officer. Thank you for spelling me in the Chair momentarily. Senator HOEVEN and his team have done great work as well.

As Chairman ROBERTS just said, there was no reason to have gone down this path and injected all of this partisan uncertainty, holding farmers and ranchers and their communities and their lenders and their welders and their truckers hostage over the last 48 hours. It served no policy purpose, and it continues to diminish public trust in this institution and our ability to serve our people.

So I just want to commend you and Senator HOEVEN and your teams for the work that you have done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, we are here today to commend our Republican leadership for forging a bipartisan compromise on a continuing resolution to avoid a government shutdown.

In particular, I am so pleased that we reached an agreement that included full reimbursement to the Commodity Credit Corporation, which we have all been talking about—not only agreement, but to take away the potential of unnecessary delays in farm and conservation payments, which are so important to our farmers.

For decades, the CCC has been routinely reimbursed without fanfare, but, unfortunately, not so this year. Our farmers and ranchers have faced more than enough challenges this year—extreme weather events, low commodity prices, market volatility, a global pandemic, and the list just goes on and on and on. They don't need Washington to make things even more difficult.

With passage of this bill, with the full CCC reimbursement, farm and conservation program payments will go out as planned and will offer farmers and ranchers a little more certainty and a little bit more predictability to continue growing the food and fiber for this Nation—not only for this Nation but for the world.

These important programs—like Ag Risk Coverage, Price Loss Coverage, Market Assistance Loans, the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, and others—were authorized in the 2018 farm bill that was supported with an overwhelmingly bipartisan record number of votes in the Senate.

So I want to really just thank all of those involved in this effort. They worked so, so very hard. A special thanks to Senator MCCONNELL and his staff and Chairman ROBERTS, whom we have with us now, who is certainly the voice of ag in the Senate and in Congress. We are going to miss him greatly, as he decides to step aside. And also to Senator HOEVEN and the great work that he did through the ag appropriations part of this.

Then, as Senator ROBERTS mentioned, there are the staffs that worked so, so very hard, and also the members of the Ag Committee who stepped up and really shouldered the burden and just did a tremendous job in really explaining to Congress and explaining to the public how important this issue was and that we simply could not go forward without getting it included.

Then we are here, and we fight. We are kind of the tip of the stick and the spear in the ag community and worked really hard in that regard. We simply couldn't get it done without the agriculture groups that worked so, so very hard, again, in educating the farmers. They understand how important this is, but, again, mobilizing them, mobilizing the public so that we could have the great result that we did.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I would like to thank the Senator from Arkansas again for his diligence and hard work, and our Ag chairman.

I just want to wrap up with some thank-yous, as well, and it starts with our Ag chairman, not only for his leadership on the farm bill but then on making sure we fund these farm programs.

I tell you, it has been something that I know Senator BOOZMAN agrees with me on. We have learned a lot from him, and we appreciate it. It has made a real difference for farmers and ranchers across this country.

I want to thank, of course, all of the Senators that worked with us on this project—I named them earlier—but our House Members too. We reached out to Members of the House, whether it was the ranking member on the Ag Committee, Representative CONAWAY, or whether it was Representative FORTENBERRY. There are many others that reached out and helped as well.

I agree. I want to thank our staff, led by Tony Eberhard, my chief, and on the Agriculture side, by Morgan Ulmer and her whole crew, Shannon Hines, and, of course, RICHARD SHELBY, our leader on the Approps side, and somebody whom you worked with for many, many years, Mr. Chairman.

It takes all of these people working together. This was really important,

not just for the farm bill but for that disaster assistance, the coronavirus food assistance funding that we are providing, as well, which our farmers and ranchers need so very much as we go through this COVID fight.

So let me just wrap up. This is something that the Ag chairman brought up. I thought, as usual, right on. He said we wouldn't have been able to get this done without the farm groups and the ranch groups stepping up and calling their Member, whether it was their Senator or their House Member.

Our chairman also already introduced this into the RECORD—the letter—which was so important. But I am going to take just a minute and read through those ag groups, if I could, as our way of finishing up with a thank you.

I am just going to read through those 47 groups: Agriculture Retailers Association, Amcot, American Agri-Women, American Cotton Producers, American Cotton Shippers Association, the American Dairy Coalition, American Farm Bureau Federation.

I have got to say that the American Farm Bureau Federation took a real leadership role, so a special thanks there.

But thanks to all of these groups: American Pulse Association, American Sheep Industry Association, American Soybean Association, American Sugar Alliance, Association of Equipment Manufacturers, Cotton Growers Warehouse Association; Cotton Warehouse Association of America, Crop Insurance Professionals Association, National Association of Wheat Growers, National Barley Growers Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Corn Growers Association, National Cotton Council, National Cotton Ginners Association, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, National Farmers Union, National Milk Producers Federation, National Sorghum Producers, National Sunflower Association, Panhandle Peanut Growers Association, Plains Cotton Growers, Produce Marketing Association, Rural & Agriculture Council of America, Society of American Florists, Southeast Cotton Ginners Association, Southern Cotton Growers, Southwest Council of Agribusiness, U.S. Canola Association, U.S. Cattlemen's Association, United Egg Producers, United States Peanut Federation, US Rice Producers Association, USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council, USA Rice, and Western Peanut Growers Association—all representing farmers and ranchers.

They produce the highest quality, lowest cost food supply in the world that benefits every single American, every single day.

With pleasure I yield, for the final words, to our esteemed chairman.

Mr. ROBERTS. I am not sure this is the final word. In the Senate of the United States there is no final word, I would assume.

But this points out something that is just absolutely understandable—common sense. When people ask me how on

Earth we got 87 votes together for a farm bill, with the tremendous help of the ranking member, Senator STABENOW, it was pretty easy.

We were holding hearings, as both of the Senators know. And people asked me: How do you get something like this done?

It is just a huge undertaking. You have to listen to farmers. You have to sit on the wagon tongue and listen.

Well, this time we didn't have to sit on the wagon tongue and listen. United, they said: What on Earth is going on? How did this proposal get loose? In other words, keeping us out of the continuing resolution, given the problems that we are having, what on Earth is going on?

And so it wasn't much of a surprise to any of us when farmers—every one of them represented by the groups that the distinguished Senator has just listed—said: Whoa. Wait a minute. We are getting left out.

I think the leader in a conference said something about, well, other than the fact that we are treating agriculture and farmers like bums—I mean, it was pretty clear what was going on, and it was terribly counterproductive. I don't know how people come up with these things. It is what it is.

But we listened to farmers. We got the job done. We cooperated. It was bipartisan.

Some of the nutrition programs were addressed. It was a good news story. We couldn't have done it, however, without the 47 groups that sounded the alarm. And so we have been able to do it over a period of about 3 or 4 or 5 days.

I thank everybody concerned. I think it is a good news story in the end result.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. Chairman, I also want to add Terry Van Doren to that list, who is here this morning on the floor. He worked tirelessly and stood firm in the negotiations. So, Terry, thank you to you as well.

And, again, the final word, though, has to go—I think Senator BOOZMAN would agree with me—to our Ag chairman. Thanks so much.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me at the outset join in with my Republican colleagues. Coming from a farm State, I am glad that we have a bipartisan continuing resolution until December 11.

I am saddened that we don't have the Appropriations Committee working through its normal process, nor the Budget Committee. This is the world we live in now—continuing resolutions. And this continuing resolution does include money for the Commodity Credit Corporation, which is the usual source of payments for agriculture programs agreed to in the farm bill.

There was some question as to whether or not there was enough money in the CCC account to take care for the months to come. Now there is

no question that it will be adequately funded. That is a positive thing.

I also am happy to report that the early press reports that we saw suggesting CCC funds were actually going to be diverted to oil companies—oil companies—was expressly prohibited as part of this negotiation.

Understand what is behind this. These oil companies have benefited from a decision by the Trump administration to give small refineries waivers when it came to the blending of ethanol with their product. The net result of that decision by the Trump administration was that a large number of these small refineries were given waivers for blending, and, as a result, the actual production of ethanol declined dramatically. It is one of the major reasons that corn is grown and sold. It is for that use, and it was diminished dramatically.

It was one of major reasons why, as the ethanol industry cratered, that farm income in many States was cut in half from what it normally has been.

In just the last few days, there has been an attempt to rectify the situation, which should have been changed years ago, and rectifying it to say that, once again, there will be blending of ethanol with gasoline in the United States, which I support. And then someone suggested, well, let's give an additional subsidy to the oil companies from the Commodity Credit Corporation—a terrible idea from the start. I am glad it is not included in this final product.

Let me mention one other part of this that is included that I think bears notice, and that is the fact that there is an extension of the school feeding program for the next school year.

We have an extraordinary situation with the COVID-19 pandemic where many schools are not bringing kids into the classroom. Many of these kids are being taught online across America. I know it because I know my grandkids are going through this. For those who are in lower income-qualifying categories, we have now extended in this continuing resolution the accessibility of these school feeding programs for the next school year. That is important. Kids, if they are going to learn, have to have nutrition. We don't want them suffering from hunger in the process in any way, shape, or form in this great Nation.

I want to salute not just the CCC, which has been lauded over and over again in this last half hour, but this decision that my side of the aisle was pushing for to extend school lunch and school feeding programs into the next school year. I think it will give some peace of mind to administrators who are trying to cope with the current situation.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. President, on a completely different subject—but related—we have lost 200,000 Americans to coronavirus. The predictions are that by election day there could be 300,000 deaths and by the first of next year, 400,000 deaths.

My heart goes out to the families affected. I listened as spokespeople for the administration talked about the wonderful job that they have done in defending America from the coronavirus. The numbers don't back them up at all.

The United States of America has 4.5 percent of the global population, and yet as of this morning, we have 20 percent of the COVID-19 deaths in the world—4.5 percent of the population, 20 percent of the COVID-19 deaths. This great and powerful Nation, with the best doctors and hospitals and researchers and pharmaceutical companies in the world, has one of the worst records in fighting this virus in the world. It is sad to think that you are five times more likely to be infected by COVID-19 in the United States than if you were living in Germany; twice as likely to be infected by COVID-19 in the United States than if you were living in Canada. Canada, just across the border, has an infection rate half of what the United States has. What is it that they did that we didn't do?

Well, they came together as a nation with a national policy, and it worked. We didn't. This President basically said to the Governors: You are on your own. As a consequence, there was a mad scramble to get protective equipment. There was a mad scramble for ventilators. It was a free-for-all when it should have been a coordinated national policy.

Then, when the public health experts told us the obvious, that we ought to use these masks, and we should practice social distancing, washing our hands, and avoiding crowds, the President of the United States said just the opposite. One day he wore a mask—I saw on television—when he visited a veterans hospital. I don't know if he has ever worn one before or since. When the message from the public health experts who insisted that it was the best way to break the back of this pandemic, this President mocked them by holding rallies across the United States with all of his loyal fans pointedly not wearing masks to show they really didn't care—didn't care about any of the public health advice, and we are paying the price for it.

More people are infected in this country than Canada. We have double the rate here over Canada, five times the rate over Germany. So many more have died in this country who should be living today. The President, at various times, has said, when asked about the deaths: "It is what it is." That is an off-the-cuff dismissal of the issue, which is beneath the dignity of any leader of either political party.

Despite the urgent needs of families, businesses, workers, and unemployed Americans across the country, we haven't followed through on the original CARES Act, which passed in this Chamber on March 26. It was that date, by a vote of 96 to 0, that Republicans and Democrats said: We take this seriously, March 26, and we are going to