

Mr. Buttigieg agreed to work with me on this issue.

I also enjoyed discussing autonomous vehicle legislation with him. He shares my interest in the technological, environmental, and safety benefits self-driving vehicles can offer, and I look forward to working with him on this issue.

Highway bills have always been a place for bipartisan cooperation, and the bill released last Congress by Senators BARRASSO and CARPER was no exception. I hope that bipartisan tradition will continue in this Congress and that Democrats and Republicans can work together to deliver a significant infrastructure package in the near future.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, on the subject of bipartisanship, I am disturbed by the rumors that Democrats plan to use reconciliation to force another COVID bill through Congress on partisan lines before even giving good-faith effort to bipartisan negotiations.

Republicans are more than willing to work with Democrats on additional targeted COVID relief legislation.

Now, I won't pretend that we don't have reservations about some of the measures that Democrats have proposed. For instance, I don't think an emergency COVID relief bill is the place to push through a change that would more than double the Federal minimum wage and directly increase expenses on businesses that have been decimated by the pandemic. That is a policy with a lot of economic consequences, and it shouldn't be pushed through Congress in a hasty fashion.

Republicans are also concerned about the enormous amount of money that Democrats want to spend. We have already spent more than \$4 trillion to address this pandemic, and we need to be very careful—very careful—about additional spending and appropriate only what is necessary to respond to this pandemic and with an eye to the burden that we are putting on the economy and on young Americans as we increase our national debt.

The higher our national debt, the greater the drag on economic growth and the more likely it is that young Americans will face increasingly burdensome tax bills in the future to meet our debt obligations.

But let me be very clear. While Republicans certainly have concerns about some of the Democrats' proposals, we are committed to defeating this pandemic and to getting Americans vaccinated, and we are ready to work with Democrats on any necessary COVID relief legislation that would achieve that objective.

It would be very disappointing if Democrats decided to shove a partisan bill through Congress without even attempting to work with Republicans.

MARCH FOR LIFE

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, before I close, I want to take a moment to recognize those South Dakotans participating in the virtual March for Life tomorrow.

We have gotten used to saying "it is going to be a little different this year" during the pandemic, and that applies to the March for Life as well. Usually, tens of thousands of Americans travel to Washington, DC, every January to participate in the march—Americans from every State in the union, of every political persuasion, of every religion or none at all—all united by their commitment to defending the dignity and value and humanity of the unborn child.

This year the march will be virtual, but pro-life Americans will still be united in spirit. To all of those South Dakotans virtually marching tomorrow and to all those Americans everywhere united in the pro-life cause, thank you. Thank you for standing—standing up every year on the anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision.

Most of all, thank you for everything that you do throughout the year, because the biggest work of the pro-life movement happens outside of the March for Life. It happens in churches around America, where congregations collect money to support prenatal care for pregnant women in need or gather diapers and baby supplies to give to struggling mothers. It happens on college campuses, where pro-life students educate their peers about the reality of abortion. It happens in crisis pregnancy centers, where moms and dads facing unplanned pregnancies are met with resources and love and support. It happens at maternity homes, where single moms get the support they need to have their babies and to build job skills or get an education.

Every day, you are building a culture of life in this country with your work and your political action and your prayers. I know that is not always easy, but the race is not to the swift nor the strong. It is to those who endure, and I am confident that, sooner or later, right and justice will prevail because we have the truth on our side—the truth that every human being, no matter how old or how young, no matter the race or the color of their skin, no matter their religion or political persuasion, is created in the image and likeness of God and has infinite dignity and worth.

So keep standing up for the babies, and tomorrow I will be joining my prayers with yours that one day soon the right to life of unborn human beings will be protected in law.

May God bless you all.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MARCH FOR LIFE

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, our Nation was founded on an incredibly powerful and truly audacious idea. The idea was that every single human being was created equal, with rights that come from your Creator, from God—not from the government, not from the laws, not even from the Constitution or your leaders. You are born with those rights. Inherent in that is our powerful national commitment that I think remains to this day, the belief that everyone should have freedom and that everyone—because freedom comes with those rights—and that everyone be treated fairly.

For 244 years, our story has been that of a nation on a continuous and a steady march to live up to those ideals. Tomorrow, thousands will come to Washington once again for a different march but one that I believe is tied directly to this Nation's ongoing quest to fulfill the promise of its founding.

Almost half a century ago, the Supreme Court of the United States decided that within our Constitution, there was the implicit right to end the life of an unborn child. Since then, every single day in this country, unborn human beings have had their life ended before they even drew their first breath. They are, in essence, denied the freedom to live, not because they did anything wrong; they are denied this most basic of rights unfairly because of circumstances they have nothing to do with and do not control.

That this occurs here is shameful enough, and I believe that is how history will regard it; that we use taxpayer money to promote it and export it abroad is outrageous.

Before we even passed a bill to deal with the pandemic or to bring back good jobs to the United States or any of the other major issues confronting our country, in one of his first acts as President, President Biden decided to prioritize tearing up the so-called Mexico City policy—a policy that rightfully bans our taxpayer dollars from being sent to organizations that use them to perform or promote abortions overseas.

Abortion is a very difficult and uncomfortable topic. No one can pretend that if some 15-year-old girl is pregnant and afraid—afraid of her parents, afraid of what others might think, afraid for her future—that she faces an easy choice. It is not.

It doesn't feel fair, it doesn't feel like freedom to have laws that tell people what they can or cannot do with their body, but in this case, the challenge we have is that it is a case that puts the fundamental rights of two people into direct conflict—the right, as most definitely exists, of a mother to choose what to do with her body versus the right of an unborn child to live. It