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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Thursday, March 19, 2020, at 9 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 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.

Holy God, we love You. You are our strength, rock, and protection. Use our Senators today to make our Nation safer and better. May they often think of the positive legacy they can lead through faithful service to You and country.

Lord, remind them that You have brought our Nation through much greater difficulties than the ones we now face. As they strive to unite for the common good of this land we love, may they embrace Your promise that You will never leave or forsake us.

We pray in Your merciful 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. LOEFFLER). The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

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

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, the Trump administration wants the U.S.-Mexico-Canada agreement to enter into force by June 1. I am eager, as well, for that to happen, but we must first ensure that Canada and Mexico are complying with their commitments under that agreement.

I am especially concerned that the June 1 date presents unique challenges for the U.S. oil industry, when it is already facing significant supply chain disruptions due to COVID–19.

As we learned in 2009, the health of the auto industry is critical to the health of the entire American economy. I urge the administration to take very seriously the concerns expressed by the highest level of the auto industry to ensure a reasonable timeline for entry into force of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada agreement auto regulations.

It would be prudent right now to let these companies focus instead on the health of their workforce and supply chains.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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 MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, every day our country grows more affected by the continued spread of the coronavirus. Every American is feeling the anxiety and uncertainty of this national challenge—older Americans and young Americans, healthy Americans and those with underlying medical conditions, parents, teachers, working Americans, and small business owners, certainly, our first responders and healthcare professionals. Everyone—everyone—is impacted in different ways and to different degrees, but all Americans are affected.

All of us have seen our daily lives transformed in what feels like the blink of an eye. That is the bad news, and it is the good news too. We are all in this together—all in it together. Our Nation faces this serious challenge, but working together we can take bold steps to combat it.

Earlier this month, Congress passed billions in urgent funding for public health and small businesses, and this Senate majority remains committed to taking further bold steps to preserve and protect the economic foundations of our country.

Later today, the Senate will vote on a House proposal that seeks to address one small piece of the problem before us. It is a well-intentioned, bipartisan product assembled by House Democrats

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

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and President Trump's team that tries to stand up and expand some new relief measures for American workers.

I will vote to pass their bill. This is the time for urgent, bipartisan action, and, in this case, I do not believe we should let perfection be the enemy of something that would help even a subset of workers.

However, the House's bill has real shortcomings. It does not even begin to cover all of the Americans who will need help in the days ahead. And, more specifically, it achieves one of its signature policies by imposing a new, untested mandate on small businesses without—without—guaranteeing they will have sufficient funds in advance to finance this new employee benefit.

Everyone agrees that workers need relief. The Republicans are working on bold solutions to help individuals and families as we speak, but small businesses need relief as well.

This is literally the worst time in living memory to pile even more burdens and costs onto small businesses, which are, themselves, fighting to stay alive unless—unless—we back it up with major assistance.

We all know what small businesses are up against. Just this week, New York City joined the list of towns and cities across the country where local officials have shuttered every bar and every restaurant for the sake of public health. At 5 p.m. today, all public-facing businesses in my home State of Kentucky will do the same. These job creators are literally being taken offline by their own governments for the public good.

It is not only bars, restaurants, and entertainment businesses we need to worry about. Nobody expects Main Street small businesses of any sort to hold the kind of cash buffer they would need to remain in business and wait out a national economic disruption that could last for weeks or months.

Men and women who pour their entire lives into small businesses do not need even more obstacles. They need help. They need a lifeline. They need to know that Congress understands the historic obstacles they are facing and that we have their back as well.

There is no moral hazard here. This is not some rescue following risky business decisions. Nobody thinks any of this is the fault of small businesses. So while I will support the House bill in order to secure emergency relief for some American workers, I will not adjourn the Senate until we have passed a far bolder package that must include significant relief for small businesses all across our country.

As we speak, Chairman RUBIO, Senator COLLINS, and others are assembling a historic level of assistance for small businesses across America. We want to help them survive this disruption, absorb the new mandate in the House bill, and continue to make payroll and avoid layoffs as much as they can and emerge this storm in the best shape possible. That means a historic injection of liquidity and access to credit, and it means Washington working directly with the lenders who already work with these small businesses to minimize the new bureaucracy so the assistance can flow as fast as possible.

So we are going to pass the House's bill, but its imperfections will just make our more comprehensive package even more urgent. So we aren't leaving. So everybody understands, we aren't leaving until we deliver. The Senate is not going to leave small business behind.

This will be just one component of our work. As we speak, Chairman GRASSLEY and others are determining the best pathway to put money directly in the hands of the American people—those who are employed, those who may be laid off, retirees, disabled Americans, families—as quickly as possible.

Of course, Chairman ALEXANDER and a number of our colleagues are working on further steps in our public health fight against the virus itself, such as getting more tools in the hands of healthcare providers, removing barriers to treatment, and helping researchers develop therapeutics and vaccines.

Chairman WICKER and several Senators are considering the possibility of targeted relief for key industries that are shouldering an outsized burden from the public health directives and which our Nation will need to be operational on the other side of this.

We are crafting bold and significant legislation to meet this crisis head-on and to strengthen our Nation.

The Congress has an enormous role to play in responding to this challenge, and we are determined to do that duty. But, at the same time, never in our Nation's history have Americans looked solely to Washington for answers. That is not who we are. This is no different.

Even amidst the uncertainty, the American people are stepping up and reminding everyone what solidarity and citizenship look like. In my home State, Kentuckians are going out of their way to stand with their neighbors. Stay-at-home parents are volunteering to help neighbors with childcare when parents are unable to telework. Grocery stores in the Louisville area are setting aside the first hour they are open each day, right after their cleaning, so older shoppers and those with underlying conditions can shop first and with less exposure. One local restaurant is distributing free meals to service industry workers whose hours have been cut.

This is what makes the United States of America what it is, and it is what we are today: generosity, friendship, resolve, and strength.

This is not a challenge anyone wanted for our Nation, but it is a challenge we will overcome. Someday—hopefully, soon—our Nation will have this virus on its heels, mainstream small businesses will be thriving again, and families will be flying around the country again to reunite and catch up. We will have gotten through this together. In part, it will be because the Federal Government and Congress did our part, but, just as important, it will also be because every single American did theirs.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, Madam President, some observations about how we will conduct the voting that will likely occur later today, for the information of all of our colleagues. What we will do is have a 30-minute rollcall vote. We want to avoid congregating here in the well. I would encourage our colleagues to come in and vote and depart the Chamber so we don't have gaggles of conversation here on the floor. That is particularly important for our staff here in the front of the Chamber.

So I would encourage everyone to take full advantage of the full 30-minute rollcall vote. Come in and vote and leave, and be aware of the social distancing that Dr. Monahan and others have recommended as we come over to the Chamber and as we depart. With that, I think we will be able to get through the voting that will occur, in all likelihood, later today without violating any of the safety precautions that have been recommended to us by the Capitol physician and others.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I come to the floor this morning with sad news. Illinois has lost its first resident to the coronavirus—a pandemic which is threatening our country and the world. Her name was Patricia Frieson, 61 years old, a retired nurse. She was an exceptional person. Her brother said she cared for everyone but herself. She lived taking care of people, and she loved it.

She started having breathing difficulties last week and was hospitalized at one of our better hospitals in the city of Chicago and succumbed yesterday to the coronavirus and its complications. She had a history of respiratory illness, but she was taking care of herself and staying home, as she was told to do.

The family remembers the last time she left the house was 2 weeks ago to attend a funeral of a friend. She did entertain visitors at her home from time to time. Her two sisters have asked for tests themselves because they were in contact with her. I am sorry to report they have been unable to obtain those tests, at least as of late last night.

I have spoken with the Governor of Illinois almost every day, and we are having—through the State laboratories—about 350 tests each day, this State of almost 13 million people. In addition to the State lab tests are the private labs and hospital tests, which account for a number comparable but not much larger than 350. There just aren't enough tests. I am sure our plight is not unusual.

We have heard a lot about the tests on the horizon, coming soon—the sooner the better. Until we get into more complete testing, it is going to be difficult for us to measure the extent of the infection and the impact. It is almost impossible to target areas of our State that need more attention than others because of the lack of testing.

We had a nursing home over the weekend where there was a patient who tested positive for the coronavirus. The Department of Public Health of the State of Illinois went to that nursing home in Willowbrook as a consequence of the first test and tested all of the residents and staff and found 22 tested positive for the coronavirus infection. Naturally, that raised our numbers dramatically. We now have 160 known cases in our State, in 15 different counties. It is an indication where there is a signal of infection that testing is absolutely essential so we can identify all of those who may test positive.

Patricia Frieson's brother Richard was asked what he thought about the news that she was the first fatality in our State. He said it was heartbreaking. But then he said: I tell everybody to take this very seriously, as we should.

I think, across the United States, we are coming to realize that this is an exceptional public health crisis and challenge, the likes of which we have never seen.

Sometime later this morning or early this afternoon, we will consider the package that was passed by the House of Representatives in the early morning hours of Saturday. It is a package that was designed to provide some help, some financial assistance, to workers and families across the United States who are coping with the illness or losing their jobs or being laid off because of the state of the economy.

We on the Democratic side feel—and I believe that feeling is shared on the Republican side—that one of the first things we need to do is to assure those employees who may not feel well that it is best to stay home, and there is a way to do that without sacrificing the basics in life—your home, your food—which your family counts on.

We put together this package with the White House on a bipartisan basis that provides family leave and medical leave. It also provides extension of unemployment benefits that are necessary for many workers across this country.

Passing this bill this morning or this afternoon is an important step forward to let the people across America know we are doing what we can here in the Senate and in the House to be responsive.

Senator MCCONNELL came to the floor this morning and announced the next bill—coronavirus 3, if you wish—which is a much larger undertaking, and it will embark on trying to get the economy on its feet enough to sustain what we are facing with layoffs and business closures. It is a daunting task. The amount of money involved is anywhere from $700 billion to $1 trillion. I have heard these estimates from time to time. That is a massive amount of money by any measure, but when measured against the economy of the United States, it may not be adequate to the challenge.

Some have suggested cash payments to individual Americans. I have no aversion to that idea, but I hope it is substantial, and I hope it isn't a one-time helping hand that isn't followed up.

Many of us on the Democratic side are working on a program that we think will say to families that we are not just going to send you one check and wish you the best; we are going to stand by you during this very difficult, challenging time.

I spent the last several days on the telephone with business leaders across our State. It started with calling one of my favorite restaurants that sent an online message about closing down for business and being not quite sure of their future. It is troubling to hear a person or family member who put their life into a restaurant now facing closure, wondering if they will ever open again.

Some of us are buying gift certificates at our favorite restaurant to help them get through this and help their employees during this period of time. My wife is doing that in Springfield. I have done it in Chicago. We will probably do it more. I encourage others who want to make sure that restaurant is there after we weather this storm to extend a helping hand if we can.

Some of these restaurants are teaming up with charitable organizations to produce the meals that are needed for schoolchildren and their families. It is a little different assignment, but these restaurants are the best in their profession, and it is great to see them cooperating and working together.

I might also add that the Democrats have a proposal that Senator SCHUMER has spelled out and will undoubtedly speak to again when he comes to the floor this morning. At this moment, we have at least two tracks, two paths toward the third bill to try to help the economy. Senator MCCONNELL has suggested that he will do his exclusively among Republicans, and that may be a necessary starting point, but I urge him and all of the leaders to come together on a bipartisan basis as quickly as possible.

The first two measures that we have passed—the initial $8 billion supplemental appropriation for the healthcare side of the equation was essential and done quickly on a bipartisan basis.

The second measure, which I hope we pass today in the Senate, was also done with the White House, Speaker PELOSI—Democrats and Republicans working together. Each of us had to give. This measure we are voting for is not what I would have drawn up, and I am sure Republicans feel the same, but it is a compromise and one on which we ought to move forward.

The third measure we are considering should be nothing less—it ought to be bipartisan from the start. In a press conference yesterday, Senator SCHUMER suggested that the four leaders in the House and Senate, Democrats and Republicans, meet with the White House and sit down at the table now to get started on putting together this measure rather than to retire to our sidelines and each work individually or separately. The sooner we come together, the better.

One of the provisions Senator SCHUMER insists on—and I would add my voice in chorus—is that we be sensitive to the reality of the healthcare facilities across America and what they are likely to face in the weeks to come. Hospitals and frontline responders are telling us they are worried they lack the equipment and resources we need. Some experts predicted as many as 1.9 million—1.9 million—intensive care unit admissions from this outbreak will take place over the next several months, swamping existing facilities. There are only 100,000 ICU beds across the entire United States, and we know accommodating 1.9 million will just overwhelm the system. There is also a major dearth of necessary masks, respirators, ventilators, gowns, goggles—all of the things that are essential to protect healthcare workers and to save the lives of those who are facing this illness.

What a frustration it is in my State, the State of Illinois, that I still get reports from virtually every level that the so-called national stockpile has not opened up its doors for my State when it comes to basic needs. I mentioned earlier about a nursing home with 22 positive infections in my State. The head of the Illinois Department of Public Health, who alerted me to this, told me that in a very short period of time,

they were going to use up the protective equipment and masks and gloves, for example, that they had available. They didn't know where to turn for more.

Let's get this together. I believe there is a national stockpile, and I believe it should be open for the States that need it immediately. Our State is one of those.

Referring to these ventilators and breathing devices, in a press conference a couple of days ago, the President said the Governors should do their best. We can do better than that. The largest stockpile of this equipment is in possession of the Federal Government, and we should turn to it quickly to help those in need.

I am very concerned as well—I will close. I see other colleagues on the floor, and I know they would like to make comments as well. I will close by also saying that as we undertake the next piece of legislation—the $800, $900, $1 trillion bill—I hope the first priority is to make sure we help our hospitals.

I have a measure with Senator LANKFORD, Republican of Oklahoma, that will compensate hospitals in rural areas and downstate areas in Illinois. I am fearful they will be the first to be overwhelmed. I hope those representing rural States will come together and join, as Senator LANKFORD and I have, to try to find a way to make sure they are adequately funded to get through this crisis.

I might add that we also need medical professionals in the long term. I hope we will dedicate ourselves to improving the National Health Service Corps as one way of doing that and focusing that in rural areas.

Finally, I have a bill with Senator ALEXANDER, Senator MURRAY, and Senator BLUNT to take a survey through the National Academy of Sciences of our dependence on foreign-made medicines and medical supplies and medical equipment so that we can establish, not only during this challenge and crisis but for future challenges and crises—whether we have adequate domestic production capacity or a necessary stockpiles to protect us. We found, for example, that some 20 major drugs were manufactured exclusively in China. As China went through the early stages of this coronavirus crisis, there was a fear that we would be cut off from sources. We have asked the National Academy of Science to give us a survey as quickly as possible.

I will close by saying that it is interesting, as I follow the emails of my friends and family and hear from my colleagues, that as we are separated with this social distance which we are trying to respect across the United States—as we are separated, it is interesting how much we are drawn together. Our family's emails and phone calls have been more numerous than ever as we think about one another more and reach out as we hear that there is a need within our family. There is more conversation and candor than I can ever recall in our family conversations.

Perhaps adversity has a created community. Perhaps this situation, this concern that we have, is leading to more empathy.

We are going to get through this. America always does. There will be some painful moments and very difficult ones. I think those who sent us to do this job in Washington expect us to put our party labels at the door, find solutions to the challenges we face, help our Nation through this crisis, and come out strong on the other side.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I thank my good friend, the Senator from South Dakota, for his usual display of patience.

The coronavirus pandemic continues to test our Nation in new and difficult ways. There is now a confirmed case of coronavirus in all 50 States and the District of Columbia. Our public health system was understaffed and underresourced, and without intervention, it could soon become overwhelmed.

Even as the market shifts from day to day, the coronavirus is slowing our economy to a near-standstill, and we are almost certainly anticipating a recession. You go to the streets of many cities, towns, and villages, and they are empty. Schools are closed in large portions of the country. Businesses are struggling not to lay off workers because they don't have customers, they don't have clients, and they don't have income. There is great urgency here.

There are really two separate and simultaneous emergencies—one in our healthcare system and another in the economy. We have to deal with both. If we don't solve the one in our healthcare, the economy will continue to get bad no matter what we do for it.

Less tangible than those two emergencies but still very real is the impact the virus is having on American society. My home city of New York is effectively on lockdown. You can go to a place like the Times Square subway station and see actually nobody there. Americans are being asked—rightly—not to gather in groups of 10 or more, not to go to dinner or to a bar or to their church or place of worship.

I lived through 9/11. It occurred in my city. I knew people who were lost. I lived through the days of the financial crisis in 2008 and other moments of national urgency. But there is something much worse about this crisis we face. I have never sensed a greater sense of uncertainty, a greater fear of the future, of the unknown. We don't know how long this crisis will last.

You don't even know if you contracted the virus right away, or maybe your spouse, maybe your child, maybe your parent, maybe your friend.

Then there is a much greater sense of isolation, a problem for which there is no cure. I miss not meeting and talking to my constituents. They are our lifeblood. That is not happening just to us here in the Senate; it is happening across America—friends who used to get together and families who had gatherings. Different social activities are gone—book clubs, card games. The fabric and sinew of our lives as human beings have been put on hold, and nobody knows for how long.

By necessity, Americans are now sacrificing their normal lives and daily routines and, maybe worst of all, sacrificing the sense of community because we all, each individually and together as a country, must fight this awful virus.

Unfortunately, we are only just beginning to see the necessary seriousness and mobilization of resources from the Federal Government. Sadly, unfortunately, and with awful consequences, this administration took far too long to wake up to this global crisis. It has wasted precious weeks in downplaying the severity of the coronavirus—weeks that could have been spent in earnest in the preparation of building our testing capacity. As a result, the United States continues to lag behind other countries in the number and the percentage of the population we are testing.

Stories of Americans who feel sick and show symptoms but who are unable to access coronavirus tests appear every day in every single newspaper. Warnings of the potential shortages of masks, hospital beds, and ventilators appear in the paper every day. In 2 weeks, the issue of ventilators and ICU beds will be like the issue of tests today. In other words, 2 or 3 weeks ago, many of us were saying to get those tests out. A month ago, people were saying it, and now we are seeing the consequences—lockdowns because we can't test people. We don't know who has the virus and who doesn't. The same crisis will be occurring in a few weeks. Mark our words. Unfortunately, it is true about ventilators and ICU beds. We are behind the eight ball on tests, and we are soon going to be behind the eight ball on ICU beds and ventilators as more and more people get sick.

The administration didn't pay attention to tests, and now we are paying the price even though many of us were hollering for weeks about the emerging issues with testing. The same problem is about to happen with ventilators. We know, in 2 weeks, the number of ventilators might become a massive problem. We must get ahead of it and get ahead of it now. I call on President Trump to use his existing authority to help address the widespread shortages of medical equipment, particularly ventilators, as a result of the COVID–19 outbreak.

I joined 27 of my colleagues in a letter to President Trump to urge him to invoke the Defense Production Act of 1950, which authorizes the President to strengthen domestic manufacturing capacity and supply in extraordinary circumstances. It is used in times of war, and we must mobilize as if it were a time of war when it comes to hospitals—beds, supplies, equipment. The DPA, the Defense Production Act, allows for the President to direct the production of private sector firms of critical manufactured goods to meet urgent and national security needs. The President should do so immediately.

A report came out today that the Army Corps of Engineers and FEMA are ready and willing to participate in the response process. The Army Corps could build temporary hospitals with beds, but it still hasn't received instruction from the White House, from the administration. I thank the men and women who are willing to be on the frontlines, combating the pandemic, but this kind of inexcusable action is maddening, infuriating, and must be rectified. Lives are at stake.

Public health infrastructure is the top priority because, if we can curb this virus, the economy will get better. We need to do things to help it, obviously, but if you ignore the public health crisis with regard to the equipment and infrastructure and personnel which is needed in many more numbers than we have ever seen, the economy will not get better.

The legislation passed by the House on Saturday—phase 2 of the coronavirus response—has a little bit of this, and it must pass the Senate today. Unfortunately, first, we must dispose of a Republican amendment that would make a condition of the bill a requirement for the President to terminate military operations in Afghanistan. Yes, you heard me right. Our Republican leadership has put on the floor an amendment that would make a condition of the bill a requirement that the President terminate military operations in Afghanistan.

In a time of national emergency, this Republican amendment is ridiculous—a colossal waste of time. We probably could have voted on this bill a day or two ago if it had not been for the need to have scheduled this amendment. I am eager—we are all eager—to dispatch this absurd Republican amendment and send this bill to the President. For instance, it allows for the free testing and treatment of the coronavirus, which is very much needed. We can send this bill to the President and begin work on the next phase, phase 3.

As my colleagues know, Senate Democrats have already outlined several proposals for the next phase of legislation, and the specifics have been made public. The proposal has four main priorities: public health capacity, unemployment insurance, paid sick leave, and priority treatment for labor in any bailout to industry. There are many things in this bill that are important: no payment on student loans or mortgages and help with our mass transit systems. There are many things, and the Democrats are going to fight for them in the next phase of the response, but the priorities I mentioned are key: public health capacity, unemployment insurance, paid sick leave, and priority treatment for labor in any bailout to industry.

On the public health capacity, as I mentioned, we need masks; we need hospital beds; we need ventilators; and we still need testing kits. So the Democrats are proposing a Marshall Plan for our public health infrastructure. The sooner we act on it, the better. We also need to help in terms of public transportation for our healthcare system. Tens of thousands of healthcare workers in New York City and in many other cities cannot get to their jobs—their very needed jobs—if there is no public and mass transit. So a Marshall Plan for our public health infrastructure is what is needed now. It will prevent the situation from getting even worse, and it will allow our ailing economy to begin to heal once we contain this virus.

Workers who get laid off or have their hours cut to almost nothing need expanded unemployment insurance—period. The Secretary of the Treasury reportedly told Republican Senators yesterday that unemployment could hit 20 percent. Unemployment insurance is a nonnegotiable part of our response to the coronavirus.

With regard to paid sick leave, Senators MURRAY and GILLIBRAND have a paid sick leave policy to meet this crisis. It should be added to this part of the legislation. I think they will ask for it in a unanimous consent request or will offer an amendment to do so. If it is not included in this part, it should, certainly, be included in the next phase of legislation.

There will be other items that we will have to address down the road. Certain industries are struggling—airlines, hotels—but we must make sure that we prioritize public health and workers over corporate bailouts. If there is going to be a discussion about a bailout, it must include workers' priorities and protections. The airlines are very important, for sure, as they employ a lot of people. Many of us who fly back and forth to our States know of the good people who work as the pilots and the flight attendants and the mechanics and the clerks and the ticket takers. They are good, fine people. We want to make sure they are protected. One of the reasons—let's not forget—that many airlines are so short of cash right now is that they have spent billions on stock buybacks, which is money they had to send out when they should have been saving it for a rainy day for their workers and customers. That issue should be addressed.

A few of my Republican colleagues have proposed a onetime cash payment of $1,000. My fellow Americans, this is not a time for small thinking, and this is not a time for small measures. This is a time to be bold, to be aggressive. A single $1,000 check would help people pay their landlords in March, but what happens after that? How do they pay their rent in April when their offices or restaurants or stores are still closed for business? How about May? How about June? The President has suggested that this recession could last through the summer. One thousand dollars gets used pretty quickly if you are unemployed. In contrast, expanded unemployment insurance, beefed-up unemployment insurance, covers you for a much longer time and would provide a much bigger safety net.

This is the time to put tribalism aside and acknowledge that this recession, if we allow it, will do real harm to Americans up and down the income scale, and it will hurt Americans of all ages. So, if we are going to provide direct payments, they need to be bigger, more frequent, and more targeted. Millionaires shouldn't get them.

These are the kinds of issues that all parties are going to have to discuss—Democrats and Republicans in the House and Senate with the White House. The sooner we discuss them together, the quicker we will be able to move forward. Yet Leader MCCONNELL announced yesterday that, in his plan to develop the next phase of legislation, Senate Republicans would sit among themselves and then sit down with the administration and come up with their own proposal before presenting it to Senate Democrats, let alone to House Democrats. The process that Leader MCCONNELL has outlined for phase 3 legislation is too cumbersome, too partisan, and will take far too long given the urgency and need for cooperation.

Secretary Mnuchin says he wants legislation passed by the end of the week. The McConnell process will not get us there. The phase 3 legislation should be the product of a five-corners negotiation, that being with House and Senate leaders—majority and minority—plus the White House. That is the way it has worked the best, the quickest, and the fairest in the past. If all parties are in the room from the get-go, the final product will be guaranteed swift passage. The process Leader MCCONNELL outlines is far too reminiscent of the typical legislative process in the Congress—a process that far too often results in delay and gridlock. We can't afford that right now.

Leader MCCONNELL was right when he said that, in times of national emergency, we must shed our partisanship and rise to the occasion. So let's begin that way—Republicans and Democrats, the House and Senate, Congress and the White House. The best way to advance phase 3 legislation is to have a five-corners negotiation from the outset.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Republican whip.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, here in the Senate, we are continuing to move forward with the next installment of coronavirus relief legislation. I expect, later today, we will pass the bill that was passed by the House earlier, and we are looking beyond it to a third bill that will provide additional relief to the American people.

As the leader has said, we have three priorities: providing direct assistance to American workers and families, many whose lives have been disrupted and dislocated in jobs, who are feeling a lot of economic harm, economic pain; giving our economy, especially our small businesses, the necessary support with which to weather the storm; and most importantly, providing medical professionals with the resources they need in order to fight this virus. The House bill addresses these priorities to some degree, but it is not a comprehensive bill, and additional legislation is going to be needed.

We especially need to ensure that the worker benefit requirements the House bill places on small businesses are accompanied by sufficient support. Small businesses are at the most risk economically during this time, and we need to ensure they have the resources they need to get through this. I am looking forward to continuing to work with my colleagues of both parties on the House bill and on additional legislation.

This is a time for all of us to come together to ensure that medical professionals, American businesses, and American families have what they need to combat the coronavirus and to deal with its effects. I can't think of a time at which we have seen schools and businesses close on such a mass scale. It is a challenging time for our country, but if we pull together, we can get through this and come out even stronger.

All of us have roles to play in combating this virus—washing our hands regularly and thoroughly, practicing social distancing, staying at home as much as possible, listening to advice from healthcare officials. All of these things are essential to our flattening the curve and limiting the number of infected Americans.

It is vital that we keep as many people as possible from getting infected so that our hospitals and medical professionals are not overwhelmed with cases. Our medical professionals are putting their lives on the line every day to care for coronavirus patients. Let's make sure we do everything we can to keep the number of cases they are dealing with as low as possible.

In difficult times, Americans rise to the occasion, and I am confident that is what we will do again.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I walked outside across the Capitol grounds, and it is such a beautiful day. The cherry blossom trees are blooming. There were mothers with young children, 3- and 4-year-old children, playing on the grass, and it seemed like just so idyllic, so perfect. It seemed like nothing could be wrong in America.

But, in fact, so much is wrong in America. Our everyday rhythm of life has been shattered. We are facing a medical pandemic and an economic collapse: K–12 schools, closed; universities, shut down; grocery stores, empty; restaurants, locked; gyms, movie theaters, music venues, closed for business.

The reverberations of so many core businesses and core retail being shut are affecting virtually every family and every small business across this country. So many forms of commerce are grinding to a halt. The economy is imploding, and it is touching the workers and it is touching those small businesses. Workers are experiencing the reality of reduced hours, lost shifts, layoffs; and they don't know when they are going to be able to pick up that work again.

Then, they are not sure how they are going to pay their utilities. How are they going to pay their rent? How are they going to pay their mortgage? And when will America and the economy start to heal, and when will they be able to go back to work?

So the American people are anxious and worried, rightly, about the threat of the disease and worried, rightly, about the collapse of the economy.

Coronavirus is marching on America. As of yesterday—or, actually, as of this morning—we have almost 6,000 cases here in our United States of America—5,881 cases as of this moment. Compare that to a week ago. We are talking about 1,200 cases a week ago. That is a five-fold increase in a week.

We now have more than 50 States affected—all the States, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Then, we can ponder the fact that the number of deaths has gone up—51 deaths compared to in the thirties a week ago.

So the coronavirus is marching on America and marching on the economy. It is a double hammer affecting families and small business, and it is particularly appropriate at this moment to share with all of you the stories of small businesses in my home State that are being impacted.

More than 40 businesses sent in their stories, and I am going to share 6 or 7 of those stories. But as we think about how we proceed, we need to recognize that this recovery needs to be one where we invest in the foundation of our economy, we invest in the families, we invest with sick leave, we invest with unemployment insurance, we invest by covering the health costs of getting tests and the cost of getting treatment, and we invest in our small businesses.

Not so long ago we had a bailout that favored big business, and big business went on to make billions of dollars and then get a massive tax break in 2017.

Right now, the airlines are asking for a $50 billion bailout, but they have spent almost $50 billion in stock buyouts over the last few years because they were so profitable. And why did they do stock buyouts? Because it increased the value of the stock options of the corporate executives in that industry.

This is a version of private gain and public pain. When a business says, ''During the good times I will keep all that money; thank you very much for not charging me any taxes to maintain our infrastructure or our military or our medical care system, and then, when we hit a hard time, we will ask to be bailed out''—so we will have conversations about that strategy for big business.

How about, instead, we focus on the families and the pain they are feeling, and focus on the small businesses and the challenges they are facing?

We need a Main Street recovery, not a Wall Street bailout. We need an economy rebuilt from the bottom up, not from Wall Street down—small businesses, like Bargaritas, a small Mexican restaurant in Ontario, OR. It is a great place for people to gather for a meal, and unlike nearby fast food restaurants, they aren't known for their takeout.

But to combat the virus, the State of Oregon has shut down sit-down restaurants and asked them to go to takeout only. Well, that is taking a toll on Bargaritas. When a couple came recently in the door and sat down for a meal, the restaurant staff had to explain that they could make their meal for them, but they would have to make it to go. The couple got up, and they didn't order to go. They walked out the door.

The owner of Bargaritas notes that they are just struggling to keep their restaurant open, that business is not coming in enough to pay the workers. So if things don't pick up quickly, he is going to have to close and ask his employees to file for unemployment.

Or how about the Paddington family of stores in Ashland, OR, in business since 1973? In recent years they have endured all kinds of challenges, including a couple of summers in which wildfire smoke created major challenges for the businesses in Ashland, OR. But things were looking pretty good this year. Business was going OK.

Now, however, the owner says they ''felt [their] world crumble in March with the threat of the coronavirus changing our world.'' They have laid off eight staff members just this week. That is 30 percent of their staff. In a single day, their sales dropped 50 percent. As things are going now, they will need to lay off more staff within the next few weeks if the business climate does not change.

And the story is much the same for the retailers throughout the town of Ashland, OR.

The story is similar in Portland, where Betsy and Iya, a company that has designed and manufactured jewelry for the past 12 years and regularly employs about 17 workers, had to downsize. They had to ask three of their workers to be let go.

This is a business that has gone out of its way to promote other local businesses, but sales have dropped off very quickly. I would presume that in this sense of crisis, families are buying essentials, and that means those in the jewelry industry are seeing their sales drop. The sales have dropped very quickly, and they are seeing the virus's huge economic impacts, and they are expecting to have to lay off more people soon, and they are looking for help.

Ultrazone Laser Tag—now, you might think that, with folks being out of work, they might go to a place to get some exercise and have some recreation, and a sense of separation might be OK. Maybe laser tag would see an upsurge in sales—not the case. Lee Sturman, of Ultrazone Laser Tag, in Milwaukie says:

My name is Lee Sturman, and I am the owner of Ultrazone Laser Tag, a family entertainment center Located in Milwaukie, Oregon. As the founder, I have successfully operated for 26 years. During this time, like all small business owners, I have battled competitors and overcome other challenging obstacles. On a level playing field, I have managed to survive and thrive. But, unfortunately, my business has been upended by an invasion of tiny microbes. COVID–19 has struck fast and struck hard. In a matter of two weeks, Ultrazone has gone from busy crowds to near emptiness.

Steve and Kristi Ball operate Basin Indoor Gardening in Klamath Falls, OR. In response to the Klamath County Chamber of Commerce collecting stories of the financial impact that COVID–19 is having on local businesses, they submitted the following and appreciate the opportunity to share, and I appreciate the fact that they responded and are sharing. Steve and Kristi note:

[They have] owned a small retail business in downtown Klamath Falls for nearly 11 years so have experience with seasonal fluctuations and customer trends that affect the cash flow and overall revenues of my store. Things have been shockingly slow since the beginning of March but especially this last week where customer traffic has almost halted. Based on last years total for March and daily sales compared to this years same time frame my store gross sales are down to about 36% of normal, indicating 64% loss in revenues. I hope this is a short lived situation and business can go back to what is normal, more than a month like this will force some difficult decisions for the future of my store.

April Severson of Portland writes:

I've owned my event production company for 20-years. My business has always had it's ups and downs but this is the first time I've had all of my contracts cancelled. I am the sole employee of my company however, my cancelled contracts have also cancelled the work for my associates and vendors in audio-visual, entertainment, decor, furniture rentals, floral and catering. Since most of my vendors are small and emerging businesses as well this has had a spiraling effect on our ability to pay for bills, insurance, mortgages and to take care of our families.

Amy Baker is the owner of Thread Bare Press in Eugene, and she notes:

My screen printing business relies primarily on schools, restaurants and events to keep our T-shirt presses running. On Friday March 13th as the stock market tanked and major cultural centers shut down across the country, I saw a third of our monthly revenue vanish in one day. In the five days since, my email inbox has remained empty as our client base struggles to shore up their expenses. I have laid off half of my six staff this week and have let the rest know that next week they will temporarily not have a job. It's hard to feel like so many people depend on me for their paychecks, let alone my own children that depend on me for our own livelihood. I have helped my staff apply for unemployment, but there is no unemployment for business owners. We are a small business that essentially lives week to week based on our clients. In a perfect world there would be money to pay my staff paid leave or savings to sustain myself while we close our doors for what I estimate to be a month. However, we are not in that position. What I'm hoping for is to ride out this storm with forgiveness on my own bills and expenses that will not get paid next month. I'll need emergency, low interest capital to get back to work and bring my staff back on.

Then we have all of our State's music venues, like Mississippi Studios and the historic Liberty Theater in Astoria and the Ashland Shakespeare Festival in Ashland. All of them are in danger of going out of business. With social distancing and prohibitions on large gatherings and a sudden cancellation of musical acts, the venues are experiencing a sudden and total loss of income.

Those stories are representative of things happening all over my State and I know in every State of the United States of America. The economy is imploding, and with each and every small business that can't pay its bills, it affects other small businesses and other larger businesses. It affects those who have rental housing and those who have mortgages. All of us are going to be touched.

That is why it is going to be so important that we turn to this third stage of response by the U.S. Senate. The first stage was to shore up the healthcare industry. The second stage was some immediate help with sick leave and unemployment insurance and food assistance and free testing for the coronavirus. That bill inexplicably has been sitting untended in this Chamber. Why aren't all 100 of us here debating it before the American people and voting on it?

I am told now that maybe, possibly, the bill may come to the floor this afternoon; that some deal will be worked out. Wouldn't it be better that we actually be on the floor talking about it, discussing it, and voting on amendments, if necessary? In a perfect world, I would like to pass it just the way the House sent it to us and get it into law immediately. The President has signed on, the House has signed on. You have Republican leadership and Democratic leadership. Why is this Chamber not acting?

Then we must immediately go to this broader strategy—the stimulus to support our economy through this collapse to try to keep the collapse from being as severe and shortening the period before it can be restored. That period is going to depend a lot on how successful we are at interrupting the course of this disease. That is why this is so important—social distancing is so important. We have to stop the disease from moving from one person to another. The disease is on the march against America, and we have to interrupt it. We have to bring it to a standstill.

Meanwhile, we have to help those families and businesses being so profoundly affected across America. Let's rebuild this economy from the bottom up, paying attention to the impact on families and the impact on our small businesses. As John F. Kennedy once put it, ''In a time of domestic crisis, men of goodwill and generosity should be able to unite regardless of party or politics.'' That is what we did after 9/11. That is exactly what must happen today.

Let us not be moved by the powerful and the wealthy to give yet more wealth and power to them. Let us be moved by the fact that we are all Americans in this together. Let us tend to the fundamental needs of healthcare and housing and education and, most importantly, good jobs as those jobs disappear across America.

Let's pay attention and work together to shore up small businesses with low-interest loans and with grants to see them and their employees through this difficult time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, thank you. I want to thank my colleague from Oregon for his big heart and his compassion, continually always worrying about those being left behind and forgotten. I can assure you that Mr. MERKLEY does not leave anybody behind, and he never forgets those who are in need of help.

Let me just say, in speaking about what we are dealing with, unlike anything we have ever seen in my lifetime and most people's lifetimes, up until a couple days ago, my State of West Virginia felt like we were immune. There were no cases reported, and we were like an island in a sea of infestation around us. I knew that was not the case. Many people did not know that we were just not testing and the amount of tests were just not out there, so people had a false sense of hope and security.

That has been shattered. We have our first case now. I am praying to the good Lord we don't have many more, but I suspect because of the fragility of our citizens and the elderly population that we have, those who have done

hard work all their lives and have respiratory ailments could be in jeopardy. We are very concerned about that.

I was reluctant to come and speak, but I think there are some things that need to be said. We are moving in an unprecedented way to how much money should be thrown at a pandemic and how much money do they believe it will take to get us through this horrible time. First of all, we should be thinking about are we investing and trying to build our healthcare defense system back up? It has been basically decimated over the last 2 or 3 years. Should we not put the scientists and people who know back in positions where they can be looking at these horrible illnesses and diseases, pandemics, and viruses that we have coming from different parts of the world to protect us from them hitting our country again like this?

Next of all, should we not be putting everything we have into our research capabilities and working with all the scientists in all the different centers so that we can find a way to treat this virus with a vaccine that would prevent people from contracting this virus? Those are the measures we should be totally and absolutely committed to and spending our time and effort immediately upon.

Next of all, the financial help that we are going to need. First of all, don't you think we should be using this—through every challenge that we have ever had in this great country, we have found a way to come out of it bigger and stronger. Don't you think we should be manufacturing the medical devices that we need to heal and cure and take care of American citizens right here in the good old USA? Don't you think we should have the amount of products it takes to make the pharmaceutical pills that we need in order to keep us healthy or cure us, if you will? Don't you think some of that should be done in the USA that we have allowed to leave our shores and which now we find is desperately needed? Don't you think we should be making the medical masks to protect our first responders and all of our medical workers whom we need to have on the job? Those are the things we are worried about from the fallout that can come from this horrific pandemic. It gives us a chance to reconnect and also a way to correct the lackadaisical approach we have had to manufacturing over the years. This is a time for change.

Let me throw something else out. I don't think that you and I need a $1,000 check. I don't think we need that. I think there are an awful lot of people in America who still have a job, even if they are working from home, and that basically is not going to change their life with that $1,000 check. Think about the people who truly do need that check and a lot more—people on the frontline who have no control of this whatsoever, that don't have a guaranteed source of income unless they are out there earning it every day. Don't you think we could help them more through expanded unemployment benefits, working through the system that we already have in place in all of our States and in this country? Don't you think that might be a better way?

How about the small businesses that are not capitalized to the point that they have no ability whatsoever to continue to operate when there is no capital or cashflow or reserves to take care of themselves? Don't you think we can help them through the SBA by removing the restrictions and redtape we have? Unemployment benefits: Basically, waiving all the wait times, increasing that to a $500-a-week limit? Things of that sort would help, don't you think?

The large corporations, which I know everyone is concerned about, got one tremendous tax break. That being said, they will come back. They can afford to pay back a loan at zero percent interest, if you will, helping in some way to keep that part of the economy stimulated but not to the point where we are putting our children and grandchildren into a debt that we can avoid—but not being compassionate and sympathetic toward those who really need it on the frontline, which is the average working person who gets up every day and finds out there is no work for them. They are already on unemployment. They are in the system. Also, the small businesses are struggling. They are there.

We are to the point now where we are going to bite off a lot more, and we are going to write checks that our children can't cash. That is exactly what we are doing, if we are not smart about this. It seems that everyone is gathering around now for whatever type of cover. I am not sitting here blaming the President or blaming any administration or anybody else for what we didn't do 2 or 3 or 4 months ago. I am asking now: Are we going to take responsibility for what we are about to do that doesn't make any sense whatsoever?

With that being said, let's make sure that the money we are putting in the system is fixing the medical end of it, finding a cure for this virus, making sure that other viruses or pandemics don't attack us. Let's make sure we are doing everything we can with what we are responsible for.

Every leader takes an oath of office. When you raise your hand, whether you are a mayor or Governor or President, whatever, you should be thinking immediately upon taking that oath, what can I do to protect the people I am responsible to represent? If you can't do that, then you are going into the wrong job with the wrong ideas, I can assure you of that.

I am saying that I have the most at-risk population in the country. It is an older population that has done heavy lifting and heavy jobs and basically has respiratory concerns and ailments. They are the most vulnerable, and this pandemic can take a horrific toll on the population of the State of West Virginia if we are not careful with what we do.

We can also change the course of how we do business and how we look after each other in America. This situation is asking all of us and challenging every one of us to look to humanity with compassion and to bring us together as a people. The American people are a most generous, caring, and compassionate people. West Virginians treat everybody as their neighbors. That is who we are. We must take care of our neighbors and reach out and help those in need.

Right now, we have a situation where I am concerned. I am concerned that all of us have not done our job as well as we could have, and we are just throwing caution to the wind, thinking we can make everybody happy with this political coverage because we are going to be throwing money at everything, thinking this will take care of it. It will not. It will not unless we deal with the root problems we have. That means fixing our manufacturing base, taking care of Americans, making sure people who can't work and who have no other recourse, basically have no control of their destiny—basically provide the services. That means the jobs have to be there to meet the demand. We cut most of that out. Let's make sure we can take care of them and do that without bankrupting our future generations. I think it can be done.

I will say this. I spoke to Vice President MIKE PENCE last night and told him the dire need we were in. I said: Mr. Vice President, I know the people are thinking that West Virginia has been spared. We have not. We haven't been tested. We need more test kits. We need more protection for our first responders. We need respirators and ventilators. We need the tents and first-tier operations. We are not in a second tier. We are too vulnerable to be in that second tier. If you want to stop the carnage that could happen if this thing breaks loose in my State full-fledged, then please help us.

I want to thank the Vice President for basically reaching out and helping West Virginia. We are going to get through this. There will be a light at the end of the tunnel. There will be a new day. We will have a chance to right the problems we have right now that have been of our own making, and we can correct them by our own actions right now.

I want to thank you, Mr. President. I hope all our colleagues are working in a bipartisan way. We should be working together. There are few times this opportunity comes. In a political arena, there are two things that happen. You better never ever take advantage of a crisis, and make something better happen. That is what we are dealing with now.

It is a mandate. People are mandating us to do our job. They are mandating us to work together, not to be irresponsible or act like we are not in

touch with the average person. We are because that is whom we represent.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, shortly, the Senate will vote on the Paul amendment, and I want this body to understand why I strongly oppose it.

The Paul amendment, in its essence, has nothing to do with the underlying proposal responding to this enormous COVID–19 crisis. The Paul amendment is a poison pill that essentially focuses on an old political issue that this body has debated before and very likely is going to debate again. I just don't believe the Paul amendment has any place in a debate on an emergency coronavirus bill.

Every Member of this Senate understands our country is facing and dealing with a national health and economic crisis. The country wants us to focus like a laser on emergency measures that can help save lives and keep families from falling into destitution.

The Paul amendment says, in effect, that immigrant families with kids are going to pay for the emergency with their kids' well-being. These families, like so many others, are especially vulnerable at this moment. It is just wrong to bring misery into their homes.

I would just ask my colleagues to save the immigration debates for another time when we are not in the middle of a pandemic. Today, the focus is about that pandemic and acting in an emergency, where we come together, both political parties, both sides of the aisle. When you are dealing with this kind of pandemic, your focus is helping families and workers, small businesses, and all of those people who are walking on an economic tightrope. They are not getting paychecks, is what we are hearing, and they are trying to figure out how to pay the rent. If they pay the rent, do they have money for food? If they have money for food, what do they do about out-of-pocket healthcare? Folks want our support with those survival issues.

On the Finance Committee—I am very pleased to see the distinguished President of this body working with us on the Finance Committee. What we have tried to do is focus on modernizing unemployment insurance. I have said to my colleagues: Let's just face it—unemployment is a system that has been in a time warp.

I think we have a very important proposal that is going to help an enormous number of people from sea to shining sea. We need to do so much right now, particularly in terms of saving lives and getting healthcare to our people.

What I hear from home is people who are following this are saying: There is so much to do. Act now, then get on with the additional steps that have to be taken. But for today, get on with this. Get on with passing this bill and getting ready to move to the next bill.

Those in need of healthcare and citizens struggling to make it through these unprecedented times want action now. They all realize that there will be several additional pieces of legislation—hopefully sooner rather than later—but our job today is to make sure we pass this bill.

I urge my colleagues, when we vote on the Paul amendment very shortly, to oppose it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I rise in support of my amendment to pay for this economic stimulus package by removing less important spending from elsewhere in the budget.

I would ask every American: If you were faced with a personal crisis and had to spend extra money and you had to spend extra money on food and medicine—money that you had to borrow from a relative—wouldn't you prioritize your resources and immediately stop loaning money to friends overseas for their children to go to, for example, space camp? Wouldn't you stop funding clown colleges in Argentina? If you had a true emergency like this pandemic, wouldn't you stop building roads and gas stations in Pakistan? If you had a true emergency like this corona pandemic, wouldn't you immediately stop spending money studying why drunk people fall down more than sober people?

I ask my colleagues to stop wasting money in this time of crisis. Stop being a rubberstamp for wasteful spending. Do your jobs and prioritize our precious resources. It is our job and our responsibility to conserve these resources.

Why is this important? Why shouldn't we just print or borrow the money instead of making cuts in things like foreign aid? Because next time, maybe in the not too distant future, our children may not even be able to borrow their way out of a crisis. Our dollar will be devalued, our economy ruined, and all because we will have been profligate fools with our resources; all because we refused to do what we were elected to do, which is to prioritize the truly vital, such as coronavirus relief and medical research, over the extraneous, such as spending money on clown colleges, gas stations, and roads in Afghanistan.

To my fellow Americans, remain hopeful, remain kind, remain faithful, and above all, remain resilient. In the world's history, pandemics are the norm, not the exception. It is only recently—in the modern era of antibiotics and vaccines—that pandemics have become less frequent.

Ever since vaccines eradicated polio and smallpox, modern man has become accustomed to the idea that life is relatively safe and that a long life is to be expected. Consequently, any re-eruption of diseases beyond our control paralyzes us with fear.

People have forgotten what it is like to experience the annual dread of recurring infectious disease. My parents remember vividly the polio pandemics of the 1950s. In one of the last great outbreaks of polio, before the vaccine, almost 60,000 people contracted polio and over 3,100 died. Jonas Salk was greeted as a conquering hero for developing the first widespread polio vaccine, but that was nearly 70 years ago. In the early 18th century, Dr. Zabdiel Boylston showed great courage in introducing inoculation for smallpox. Within a generation, smallpox was on the wane and ultimately defeated when Edward Jenner discovered how to vaccinate using the milder cowpox.

This latest pandemic already has heroes—some known, but most of these heroes are unknown doctors and nurses on the frontlines. The innovators among us are already putting forth potential treatments and possible cures. A half dozen antiviral medications are in the final stages of study. Researchers believe that an old drug developed for malaria may help. Reports indicate that scientists will likely set a speed record in developing a vaccine.

Now is not the time for malaise; now is the time for optimism. By summer, there is a very good chance we will be in the recovery phase. Now is not the time to give in.

Several generations have grown up unfamiliar with the devastation of pandemics, and even now, when it is impossible to look the other way, the young and healthy rationalize their relative safety. Psychologically, it is easier for the young and healthy to view mortality as something that happens to the old and unhealthy. Coronavirus scares us because it kills not only the old and infirm but the young and vibrant, although much less frequently. One of the coronavirus's first victims was a 32-year-old, previously healthy ophthalmologist in Wuhan.

The question is not how serious is the pandemic or whether we should act but whether there is a plan of action that can preserve our economy and lead to a quick rebound.

I don't think anyone will ever know for certain whether grinding the U.S. economy to a halt was necessary. Likewise, no one can really know the converse—what would have happened had we not attempted to slow the virus's spread. It is useful, though, to remember that just 10 years ago, we suffered the swine flu pandemic, and the swine flu was no walk in the park. It is estimated that about 60 million Americans were infected and over 12,000 people died.

Now experts have said that the coronavirus is much more lethal than the swine flu—likely true—but worldwide deaths from the swine flu were estimated to be between 150,000 and 575,000. When calm returns, it will be helpful to examine how our responses

differed between the swine flu and the coronavirus.

At one time, we were completely helpless before the ravages of natural disasters, such as infectious diseases, but our history is one of great innovation and perseverance. We will survive this pandemic. What government does to mitigate the calamity should be short-lived, temporary, and cause as little distortion to the free market economy as possible.

The history of pandemics indicates a strong likelihood that the peak of infections and mortality could pass in a few weeks to a few months. Congress should remain calm and try not to explode the debt in our response.

The public should know that Congress has already enacted reforms that will free up millions of industrial masks to be used by our doctors and nurses. Thoughtful sequestration and quarantining is in place and helping. In addition, I have introduced legislation to allow our university labs and advanced private labs to be able to develop additional testing for coronavirus and possible cures by removing redtape at the FDA.

I do worry, though, that as we go further into debt, we may reach a point where our debt is so large that we are unable to manage the next pandemic. We should never forget fiscal responsibility, even in a crisis. We should pay for any new Federal funding by taking that money from areas of the budget where it is not being wisely used. My amendment does just that.

My amendment says that if you want to apply for money from the government through the child tax credit program—this is money the government gives to people—then you have to be a legitimate person and you have to have a Social Security number. We have been talking about this reform for a decade now, and we never seem to be able to get it passed. It has nothing to do with not liking immigrants; it has to do with saying taxpayer money shouldn't go to nonpeople. You should have to be a person to get taxpayer money. It just says you have to have a Social Security number. People estimate this will save $26 billion. That goes a long way toward paying for this bill.

I think we should also end the war in Afghanistan. We are spending $50 billion a year on that war. And it is mostly not to fight war. It is to build stuff for them. It is to build infrastructure for them. We have a lot of problems with infrastructure in our own country without spending $50 billion a year in Afghanistan.

If we have a true emergency now, it is our job to prioritize, to take that money from where it is not being spent wisely and spend it on something we need at the moment.

My bill also allows the President to look throughout the budget and transfer money from any other wasteful areas. If you look at our budget, it is loaded with waste. Nobody ever culls the waste, and then we have an emergency, and they say: Let's just borrow more money. Instead, what we should do is we should actually take money that is unwisely spent and move it over to account for this emergency.

What I am offering is a very reasonable proposal. We simply pay for this emergency bill by taking money from other areas of waste in the budget.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 6201; further, that the only amendments in order be amendments to be offered by Senators PAUL, JOHNSON, and MURRAY or their designees, the text of which are at the desk; further, that at 12:10 p.m., the Senate vote on the Paul amendment subject to a 60-affirmative vote threshold for adoption; further, that following the disposition of the Paul amendment, the time until 2 p.m. be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees and that at 2 p.m., the Senate vote on the Murray and Johnson amendments, in the order listed, with a 60-affirmative-vote threshold for adoption of each; further, that upon disposition of these amendments, the bill as amended, if amended, be read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of the bill with a 60-affirmative-vote threshold for passage; finally, that if passed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and that all votes be 30 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6201) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

AMENDMENT NO. 1556

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 1556 and ask that be it reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. PAUL] proposes an amendment numbered 1556.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require a social security number for purposes of the child tax credit, to provide the President the authority to transfer funds as necessary, and to terminate United States military operations and reconstruction activities in Afghanistan)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUIREMENT FOR CHILD TAX CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 24(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

''(1) SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUIRED.—No credit shall be allowed under this section to a taxpayer with respect to any qualifying child unless the taxpayer includes the social security number of such child on the return of tax for the taxable year. For purposes of the preceding sentence, the term 'social security number' means a social security number issued to an individual by the Social Security Administration, but only if the social security number is issued—

''(A) to a citizen of the United States or pursuant to subclause (I) (or that portion of subclause (III) that relates to subclause (I)) of section 205(c)(2)(B)(i) of the Social Security Act, and

''(B) before the due date for such return.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Subsection (h) of section 24 of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking ''paragraph (7)'' in paragraph (4)(C) and inserting ''subsection (e)(1)'',

(B) by striking paragraph (7), and

(C) by striking ''(2) through (7)'' in paragraph (1) and inserting ''(2) through (6)''.

(2) Section 6213(g)(2)(I) of such Code is amended by striking ''TIN'' and inserting ''social security number''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. _____. TRANSFER AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the President may transfer, as necessary and without limitation, amounts from any account in the Treasury to any other account in the Treasury being used for the purpose of combating, addressing, or ameliorating the coronavirus pandemic.

(b) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—The President shall submit to Congress, on each of the following dates, a notification detailing each transfer made under subsection (a) during the time period preceding the notification:

(1) July 1, 2020.

(2) October 1, 2020.

(3) January 1, 2021.

(c) EXPIRATION.—The transfer authority in subsection (a) shall expire on December 31, 2020.

SEC. _____. TERMINATION OF UNITED STATES MILITARY OPERATIONS AND RECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES IN AFGHANISTAN.

(a) TERMINATION.—Military operations of the United States Armed Forces and reconstruction activities of the United States Government in Afghanistan are hereby terminated.

(b) DEADLINE FOR COMPLETE CESSATION.—Not later than December 31, 2020—

(1) all United States Armed Forces shall be removed from Afghanistan; and

(2) all reconstruction activities of the United States Government in Afghanistan shall be wound up.

(c) PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.—Appropriated funds may not be obligated or expended in connection with military operations and reconstruction activities described in subsection (a) after December 31, 2020.

Mr. PAUL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. LOEFFLER). The Senator from Kentucky is recognized.

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the votes scheduled at 12:10 p.m. be allowed to begin now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is on agreeing to the Paul amendment.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROMNEY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 3, nays 95, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 73 Leg.]

YEAS—3

Braun	Lee	Paul

NAYS—95

Alexander	Gillibrand	Portman
Baldwin	Graham	Reed
Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Bennet	Harris	Roberts
Blackburn	Hassan	Romney
Blumenthal	Hawley	Rosen
Blunt	Heinrich	Rounds
Booker	Hirono	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Sanders
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Burr	Inhofe	Schatz
Cantwell	Johnson	Schumer
Capito	Jones	Scott (SC)
Cardin	Kaine	Shaheen
Carper	Kennedy	Shelby
Casey	King	Sinema
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Smith
Collins	Lankford	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Loeffler	Tester
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Thune
Cotton	Markey	Tillis
Cramer	McConnell	Toomey
Crapo	McSally	Udall
Cruz	Menendez	Van Hollen
Daines	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Moran	Warren
Durbin	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Enzi	Murphy	Wicker
Ernst	Murray	Wyden
Feinstein	Perdue	Young
Fischer	Peters	

NOT VOTING—2

Gardner	Scott (FL)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment was rejected.

The amendment (No. 1556) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

CORONAVIRUS

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, Granite Staters are known for our all-hands-on-deck spirit—coming together in difficult times to support our friends and neighbors.

The COVID–19 pandemic has forced us all to change our daily routines and adjust to new challenges; however, one thing that has not changed throughout this public health emergency is the compassion and empathy we are seeing from people all across our State.

Every month, I recognize a person or a group of people in New Hampshire who have gone above and beyond to help their community. I recognize them as the Granite Stater of the Month. But this month, I couldn't choose just one person and, instead, wish to recognize all Granite Staters for coming together to try to slow the spread of this virus and to help those in need.

All across New Hampshire, people are taking commonsense steps, both to keep themselves healthy and to avoid unknowingly passing along the virus to others, particularly those who are at high risk. This includes washing your hands thoroughly and for at least 20 seconds and wiping down frequently touched surfaces, like cell phones and door handles. It also means practicing social distancing by going out in public only when absolutely necessary and keeping at least 6 feet between you and another person.

We have also seen that events people look forward to all year, like the Boston Marathon or St. Patrick's Day festivities, have been canceled or postponed. People are following public health officials' guidelines by staying at home and canceling long-awaited travel plans.

Taking these necessary measures is hard and unpleasant, but it has been inspiring to see how many people are willing to make these sacrifices to protect the public health.

Additionally, many people might contract only mild symptoms from COVID–19, especially those who are younger and in good health; however, it is heartening that so many of those individuals recognize how important it is to protect others who might be at higher risk, like those over 60 or people living with chronic health conditions.

As many Americans know, it is also crucial that we don't overwhelm our healthcare system and prevent an influx of patients from crowding hospitals, which could lead to a shortage of critical medical equipment and personal protective gear. Collective actions, like staying home and minimizing interactions with others, will be crucial in combating this public health emergency.

As people's lives continue to experience disruption, I have been inspired to see such a tremendous outpouring of support from people all across New Hampshire in an effort to help one another during this very difficult time. For instance, nonprofits, food pantries, and volunteers are partnering with local schools in New Hampshire to combat food insecurity in their communities. One school district held a food drive over the weekend with a local nonprofit. They were concerned that given the last-minute nature of the event, there would be low participation. To their surprise, the school reported that the community came out in droves to donate goods.

Stories like this are abundant in communities across my State, and I am immensely proud of how people across New Hampshire have come together to respond to this public health emergency.

In the coming weeks and months, it will be even more important that Granite Staters and all Americans lean on one another for support. I encourage everyone to reach out to your neighbors, especially those at higher risk, to see what you can do to help. If you have an older neighbor, see if they need help picking up their groceries. If you know someone who is a medical professional with young kids at home, ask if you can babysit.

Right now, it is important for people to remember what we can all do to help contain the spread of this virus and that we all have a role to play in doing so. In New Hampshire, we pull together, and we help one another to get through challenging times, and I know we can come together to slow the spread of this virus.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as healthcare professionals, first responders, and communities across our country work around the clock to fight the spread of the coronavirus, our televisions and news feeds have been filled with a lot of numbers—the number of new cases reported each day, the rising number of fatalities, unfortunately, and the volatile ups and downs of the stock market. All of this data paints a picture of the widening scope of this outbreak on a national scale, but it fails to represent the impact it is having on individuals and on small businesses in our communities.

I think of people like Joe Kenney, who opened Cobbleheads Bar & Grill in Brownsville, TX, nearly 25 years ago. Like other restaurant owners around the country, he is trying to adapt so he can keep his doors open while he follows guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He canceled the restaurant's popular St. Patrick's Day celebration and, instead, offered corned beef and cabbage as a takeout option, but he is nervous about just how long he can hold on and how he will be able to stay afloat.

Joe said: ''Shutting down two, three, four weeks, you can leave 25 years on the table with what we put into this place.''

Joe, to his credit, is especially, worried about his more than 30 employees and what will happen to them.

This is a familiar story for countless small businesses and their employees—small businesses that are losing customers through no fault of their own.

Erin Willis owns RM 12:20 Bistro in northeast Dallas. When she heard Mayor Johnson's announcement of limiting restaurants to takeout service, she said: ''I just hope we can survive this.''

Like Joe, Erin is mostly concerned about the well-being of her staff. Hourly workers, particularly those who rely on tips, are seeing fewer and fewer opportunities to collect paychecks. Erin is rotating employees so that everyone can have some work, but the fears about how long this could last are really settling in.

She said:

The service industry is their livelihood. If we all close, they literally have nothing.

As more and more Americans are staying home, small businesses and their employees are the hardest hit, but the impact does not end with them. The hard stop on large gatherings doesn't just mean businesses, schools, and workplaces are shutting down; it means vital community events, including things like blood drives, are being canceled.

Officials from the South Texas Blood & Tissue Center said this has put their community blood supply at risk of collapse, and while this isn't related to treating those who have been diagnosed with the coronavirus, it is vital to the ongoing, everyday work of our healthcare system. Blood donations help people who lose blood during major surgeries or after having suffered traumatic injuries. They also help those who have chronic conditions and require occasional blood transfusions.

Hospitals and donation centers are taking every precaution to protect donors while they are fulfilling the need of blood donations, and I encourage all Texans who are healthy and at low risk of contracting the coronavirus to consider donating blood. During times like these, when it is, perhaps, easy to feel that circumstances are beyond your control, this is one small step each of us can take to support our communities.

I know this is a time of serious uncertainty for both the physical and financial health of our families and our country, but I want to assure my constituents—the 29 million people I am privileged to represent in the State of Texas—that the Senate is working to provide them with the relief that we can.

Less than 2 weeks ago, the President signed a bill we passed that provided $8.3 billion in emergency funding to combat the virus, which has sent vital funding toward treating and preventing the spread of the virus, including toward the purchase of masks and personal protective equipment, as well as in supporting the development of a vaccine, possible treatments, and more diagnostics. This was an important first step toward bolstering our response in the early phases of community spread, and now we are working to address the larger impact this virus is having on American workers, families, and our economy.

Soon, the Senate will take another bipartisan step of providing support by passing the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. This legislation will go a long way in providing immediate relief for those who are struggling to make ends meet during this challenging time.

It creates a new Federal emergency paid sick leave program for those who are impacted by the coronavirus. Whether workers are diagnosed with the virus or are caring for dependents who are affected, they will be able to take up to 10 days of paid sick leave, and many Texas workers will have access to 12 weeks of paid leave in order to care for dependents because of coronavirus-related school closures.

This legislation makes important changes to unemployment insurance to ensure that Texans can take advantage of these benefits during this time of uncertainty.

It also provides food security for Americans of all ages, from schoolchildren who rely on free lunches at school to seniors who are unable to leave their homes, for every American deserves access to basic nutrition.

This bill also makes coronavirus testing free of charge for all Americans, and it includes a range of measures to support the healthcare professionals who are literally on the frontlines of this fight.

I proudly support the bill, and I am eager to get it to the President for his signature. We shouldn't delay in sending it to his desk. We have been able to come together and move two bills through Congress that support healthcare workers, neighbors, and communities that are being impacted by the coronavirus. I hope this trend of bipartisanship will continue in the coming weeks and months as we work to build on the actions we have already taken.

I echo the comment made by the majority leader that this is only the beginning of our efforts to support our country. We will keep working this week and next and for however long it takes in order to assist American workers and families, to support our local businesses, and to secure both the immediate and long-term viability of our economy. Via three task forces, the Senate has already begun the work of putting together the next economic recovery legislation, and we will not leave until we get that bill passed, too.

While most Americans' daily lives have been upended by the spread of the coronavirus, there are countless men and women who continue to go to work and fill critical needs in our society. We owe a debt of gratitude to the dedicated healthcare professionals who are on the frontlines of this pandemic; to the scientists who are working diligently to develop a vaccine; to the first responders who are continuing to expose their own health for our safety; to the farmers and ranchers and producers who are keeping us fed; to the grocery store employees who are restocking shelves; and to the countless others who are leaving their homes and their families each morning to keep us safe and healthy. We need to say thank you to each of them. As these men and women continue doing everything they can to respond to the spread of the coronavirus, the Senate will do the same.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. LOEFFLER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1559

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I call up amendment No. 1559, as provided for under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Washington [Mrs. MURRAY] proposes an amendment numbered 1559.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I have been in the Senate during 9/11, for Hurricane Katrina, for the 2008 financial crisis, and I still have never experienced anything like what we are seeing today. These are truly extraordinary circumstances, and the stories I am hearing from my constituents and from people across the country are crushing. Some of the most heartbreaking stories are the ones about people who want to do the right thing in this moment but are having to choose between staying home, as public health experts say we must, and paying the rent or putting food on the table.

I am hearing from workers like Cristal Westwood from Auburn, WA. She and her husband just welcomed their first child on February 7 of this year. They both have autoimmune diseases, but her husband's job is not allowing him to work from home. And she says:

This is an extremely stressful situation for our family. We have the option for my husband to take leave without pay for the next month or so, but that would mean we wouldn't have any income coming in to support our family. He could use up all of his sick and vacation time, but that would mean he doesn't have any left for the rest of the year in case something happens. Both of those options don't seem right.

I agree. That is not right. A pastor in Tukwila, WA, shared similar concerns

from a parent in their congregation with school-aged children who worries:

What if they call off school? I don't have anyone to care for the kids. Then, without a paycheck, we will get evicted. As it is, we already run close to eviction every month.

Since that time, all of our schools in Washington State are closed.

And then there is Chris, who lives in Seattle, works in a grocery store, and is at high risk for coronavirus. She writes:

It's an awful decision: Go to work and put your life at risk, or lose your job, lose your income, and lose your insurance. I haven't committed either way at this point. I'm trying to find a way to stay home.

I am not just hearing from workers but from small business owners, as well, across our State, people who own restaurants and shops. Everyone from farmers to fishers who are used to the spring being a time when the phones are ringing off the hook. Now no one is coming in the door. No one is calling. They want to do the right thing for their workers, but they don't have the cashflow to keep them on.

People are scared. They feel they have gotten the rug pulled out from under them, and they need our help. Unfortunately, here is what the Senator from Wisconsin wants to do. After the House overwhelmingly passed a bipartisan agreement that includes an important step forward to provide workers the paid sick leave they need in this crisis, his amendment would undo that bipartisan work by stripping any paid sick leave progress out of the bill we are voting on today.

Instead of helping people keep their jobs and their paychecks by providing sick leave, Senator JOHNSON's amendment would force workers to seek compensation through their State unemployment system, meaning they would be on their own until they were compensated by the State, and the unemployment system in each State would be drastically overburdened at a time when workers are going to need it in the event they are laid off.

Democrats are pushing for solutions through the unemployment insurance to support families and workers in the months ahead, but simply using this program now as a replacement for paid sick leave workers is unacceptable, and it is shameful. We have to do better than that.

At a time when families are facing impossible decisions, my fellow Senators face a glaringly simple one. We need to be doing as much as we can as fast as we can, and his amendment would set us backward at the worst possible time.

That is why I am here on the floor to offer our amendment, based on legislation I have worked on with Senator GILLIBRAND and Representative DELAURO, introduced yesterday. Our legislation would simply provide workers with 7 days of accrued paid sick leave, 2 weeks of paid emergency days, and 12 weeks of paid emergency leave, and it would make sure that their employers can be quickly and fully reimbursed by the Treasury Department for providing that leave.

For those who may not be ready just yet to agree we need paid sick days and paid leave going forward permanently, the amended version of this bill that we are introducing today and asking for a vote on shortly would only provide this support through December 2021.

My No. 1 priority right now is getting people the support they need right now for this emergency that is at hand, and this is a commonsense step. It is good for workers who need to stay home if they are sick or to take care of their family without losing a job or their paycheck, and it is good for small businesses that want to keep their workers and communities safe and that are struggling to stay afloat during this crisis.

It is the right thing to do for our economy, for our public health, and we should get it done as soon as possible. If we don't do this, if we let this opportunity slip by, we are sending a message to scared people across the country that we are still not willing to acknowledge the scope of the tragedy we are seeing unfold and not listening to the stories like the ones I just shared, stories that I know my colleagues have heard as well.

We must not and we cannot send that message. People need help; they need hope; and they need to see that we are willing to do the right thing and pass big solutions. So I hope all of our colleagues join us in supporting our amendment. I want to see this passed and sent to the President's desk as part of this response, and by the way, I am not going to stop fighting until that happens.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York is recognized.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, across New York State and around the country, schools are closing and businesses are shutting their doors as we face this unprecedented crisis. This public health emergency has exposed the weakness in our economy and in our system. We are not doing nearly enough for workers, for their families, and those who need to deal with medical and financial emergencies that this virus has caused.

Congress has a duty to look out for families who are staring down uncertainty, fear, and financial ruin. Our top priority must be strengthening our public health system and ensuring that hard-working Americans, who are facing this crisis due to no fault of their own, can keep their jobs while taking care of themselves and their loved ones.

We must also ensure that businesses, many of which have been forced to close their doors in the name of the public good, do not have to cover these unexpected costs alone. The PAID Leave Act ensures that every worker in America has full paid sick and family leave. It strengthens their financial footing. It gives certainty and confidence to businesses. Congress has a responsibility to pass this legislation. It is not only a health imperative but a financial one too.

Unfortunately, our colleague, Senator JOHNSON—his amendment is cynical and counterproductive. This amendment would eliminate paid sick and family leave provisions in favor of providing coronavirus-infected people with unemployment compensation. So what he is saying is you have to actually lose your job if you need to stay home to care for a loved one or because you are sick yourself, and that is just wrongheaded because, the truth is, we want people to keep their jobs. We want people to have their jobs be there when they get better or when their family member gets better. We want them to have their jobs after they recover themselves. This is why paid leave and sick leave is such a better solution than just straight-up unemployment insurance.

Workers deserve protections so they don't lose their job just because their kids' school closed, and they need to be home to look after them. Wouldn't any employee in America today prefer to keep their job and have paid sick leave rather than having to quit and take unemployment insurance? Wouldn't every Member of this body and President Trump himself want to keep unemployment numbers from exploding any further than they are already?

While the unemployment system will continue to play a very important role for those who have lost their jobs, it cannot be the only answer. I thank Senator MURRAY for her leadership and her steadfast advocacy for family and medical leave and paid sick days. This amendment is crafted to provide extraordinary economic stimulus and support to our businesses when they need it absolutely the most, and most of all, it is giving certainty because people are afraid. They don't want to have to spread coronavirus to every person they work with. They don't want to have to leave their children unattended at home. They would love to stay at work, but under the circumstances, they cannot.

Allow them to keep their jobs. Allow them to draw down on paid leave while their child is at home for a week, a month, or 3 months. If they themselves are sick, God forbid, make sure they are not in the community spreading this virus, make sure they can be home getting better and reemerging to do their work when they are well.

Democrats stand ready to work with Senate Republicans to pass this important bill. We need to meet the needs of the American people today. This is our duty in this grave time of need.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 1558

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 1558 and ask it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the clerk will report the amendment by number.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Wisconsin [Mr. JOHNSON] proposes an amendment numbered 1558.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To strike Federally mandated sick pay and paid family leave and replace it with financial support provided through State administered unemployment insurance systems and funds)

Strike divisions C, E, and G.

At the end of division D, add the following:

SEC. ___. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) it is the intention of Congress and the administration to provide immediate financial support to workers who will be idled and lose pay and benefits because of COVID-19;

(2) Federally mandated sick pay and paid family leave will prompt some employers who cannot afford this mandate to preemptively terminate the employment of workers they no longer have work for due to circumstances surrounding COVID-19;

(3) even without that negative incentive, the COVID-19 will cause many Americans to lose their jobs, and not be eligible for Federally mandated sick pay or family and medical leave, so the only income support will be unemployment insurance; and

(4) it would be more efficient to administer this Federal financial support for workers using only one, rather than two or more programs.

SEC. ___. TEMPORARY EMERGENCY FEDERAL CORONAVIRUS UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFIT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to receive the credit against the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (26 U.S.C. 23), States shall provide temporary emergency Federal coronavirus unemployment insurance benefits to any individual who has worked for pay at any time in the last 30 days and who for any calendar day is not able to engage in employment due to any of the following reasons:

(1) The individual is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19.

(2) The individual has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.

(3) The individual is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking medical diagnosis;

(4) The individual is caring for an individual who is subject to an order as described in paragraph (1) or has been advised as described in paragraph (2);

(5) The individual is caring for a son or daughter under the age of 18 years of such individual if the school or place of care of the son or daughter has been closed, or the child care provider of such son of daughter is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions.

(6) The individual is subject to a temporary lay-off under section 604.5(a)(3) of title 20, Code of Federal Regulations, due to COVID-19.

(b) WAITING PERIOD.—States shall not require any waiting period in order to receive benefits for those individuals described in subsection (a).

(c) BENEFITS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—States shall pay benefits to those individuals described in subsection (a) on a weekly basis for each calendar day an individual is not able to engage in employment for up to 14 weeks.

(2) CALCULATION.—

(A) AMOUNT.—The weekly benefit shall be the lesser of—

(i) two-thirds of the individual's average weekly earnings; or

(ii) $1,000.

(B) DETERMINATIONS.—The amount of an individual's average weekly earnings shall be determined by the State.

(d) RETROACTIVE APPLICATION.—States shall make temporary emergency Federal coronavirus unemployment insurance benefits under this section retroactively available to March 1, 2020.

(e) WORK REQUIREMENTS.—Individuals receiving temporary emergency Federal coronavirus unemployment insurance benefits under this section shall not be required to search for work.

(f) FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENTS.—The Federal government shall—

(1) reimburse States for the full cost of complying with the requirements under this section that are above and beyond the benefits currently provided under each State's current unemployment insurance law for benefits paid under this program; and

(2) reimburse any employer who employs fewer than 500 employees and who voluntarily provides paid leave to an employee for the reasons described in subsection (a) an amount equal to two-thirds of the actual payment made up to $1,000 per week and not to exceed $10,000 per employee.

(g) NATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE.—For purposes of calculating the National unemployment rate, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor shall not include workers obtaining temporary emergency Federal coronavirus unemployment insurance benefits.

(h) REGULATORY AUTHORITIES.—

(1) LABOR.—The Secretary of Labor (or the Secretary's delegate) shall prescribe such regulations or other guidance as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

(2) TREASURY.—The Secretary of Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) shall prescribe such regulations or other guidance as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of this section.

(i) SUNSET.—The temporary emergency Federal coronavirus unemployment insurance benefit program under this section shall expire on the earlier of the date of the termination of the national emergency declared by the President under the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) or December 31, 2020.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator BLACKBURN, Senator COTTON, Senator CRUZ, Senator LOEFFLER, and Senator PERDUE be added as cosponsors to my amendment No. 1558 to H.R. 6201.

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

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed and the Senator from Pennsylvania be allowed to finish our comments before we start the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, we are facing, with the coronavirus, an unprecedented situation, certainly in my lifetime. These are extraordinary times we are living in and trying to live through, and there is no doubt that extraordinary times require extraordinary measures.

The good news is that there is a lot of agreement in terms of what we need to do. We all recognize that Americans and American businesses are suffering, through no fault of their own, and they need help. We all want to provide that help. Hopefully, we want to provide that effectively and efficiently with as few negative, unintended consequences as possible.

What I would suggest is, this is really no time, though, to follow Rahm Emanuel's famous dictate that you should never let a crisis go to waste. From my viewpoint, I think one of the reasons we have had a more successful economy—certainly far more successful than the economy, the slow recovery we had out of the 2009 recession—is that this administration has focused on reducing the regulatory burden. First we stopped adding to it, and then we actually reduced it. That brought a fair amount of optimism and animate spirits to our economy because businesspeople could actually concentrate on their products and their services rather than looking over their shoulders to find out what new government regulation was going to cause them to hire a new compliance officer, increase their cost, and possibly put them out of business.

What I am suggesting is, when we provide that help—and we need to provide that help to both hard-working American workers as well as American businesses—that we do it in the most efficient and effective manner, and we do more good than harm. Now, I would argue that a new mandate on business is going to do a great deal of economic harm. It may sound good, but it is not the right way to go.

We will eventually come out of this. We will be recovering from economic woes. We need to learn the lesson from 2009, where overregulation hampered our recovery. So let's not add a new mandate. I know the House bill is only temporary, but temporary becomes permanent around this place pretty good. As Ronald Reagan once said, the closest thing to eternal life in our lifetime is a government program.

I will also say that my office has been flooded with businesses calling in also not believing this is only going to be temporary and not really having confidence in the Rube Goldberg financing mechanism for this, again, temporary mandate for paid sick and family leave.

The good news is, there is a better way, and that is what my amendment does. It creates a temporary emergency Federal unemployment insurance program sitting on top of what already exists. Rather than having two or three or more programs trying to provide that funding to workers for whom we all want to provide that support, we would have basically a single program, a single method for doing that using State unemployment offices. They are already set up to do this. With some slight modifications, they would be able to handle this, and here would be the slight modifications.

First of all, our bill waives any waiting periods, but then, we also reimburse the States for paying unemployment during that waiting period. We have the exact same eligibility as the House bill. It is focused on those individuals affected by the coronavirus, the exact same definition. The benefits are identical as well. We would provide support. We would plus-up the State unemployment benefits up to two-thirds of employee's wages, not to exceed $1,000 a week.

We also recognize those companies that are willing to voluntarily offer sick pay and paid family leave by reimbursing them up to that same level—two-thirds of actual wages, up to $1,000 per week, no more than $10,000 per employee. They are the exact same benefits as the House bill. And, of course, we actually make ours temporary.

There will be a great deal of pressure on the part of State unemployment programs to get out of this as soon as they possibly can. But they can accept it, accept that Federal help, while they need it.

So our bill sunsets; the earliest would be either at the expiration of the national declared emergency or on December 31, 2020.

This is a commonsense piece of legislation. It does not saddle small businesses, American businesses, with a new mandate that they don't have a great deal of confidence in. It would actually be funded 100 percent by the Federal Government. By the way, the House bill does not fund this 100 percent. It leaves gaps. And it would definitely be temporary in utilizing the existing programs in the States that are sitting on top of it, providing Federal support for the workers who are going to actually need it as we go through this unprecedented event in our Nation's history.

With that, I yield the floor to the Senator from Pennsylvania.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Wisconsin for leading on this effort.

I rise in strong support of this amendment. The two of us—and I suspect almost everybody in this Chamber—fully support the idea, the goal, and the need to provide relief to workers who have been affected by this pandemic. That is not what is in dispute here. There is a legitimate and serious concern about the mechanism by which that is provided.

The House bill imposes a very significant administrative burden on the very small businesses struggling to survive. We are all taking these phone calls from all across our States—men and women who are operating a business. They are on the edge, and they are trying to figure out: How do we stay alive? How do we keep this business alive until we can come out on the other side? They are struggling with all kinds of very, very tough decisions that they are having to make for the first time ever in completely uncharted waters.

Then this legislation comes along and says: Now, by the way, you are going to have to figure out and navigate your way through a whole new system you have never heard of before, and you are going to have to go through all the books and the rules and regulations and consult your lawyer and figure out exactly how you comply with this complex, new mechanism so that you comply with the law and get the reimbursement that is intended. That is a huge problem for these folks who are struggling to stay alive.

So what Senator JOHNSON's amendment does is this: It just shifts the substantial administrative costs and burdens off the back of the business owner and operator and allows it to be managed by the State unemployment systems that are in the business of providing compensation. We plus it up, and we waive the waiting periods so that the individual workers who are adversely affected by this COVID–19 pandemic will still get the benefits that we all want them to get. It is just a better way to deliver this.

So I hope my colleagues will vote in favor of it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I strongly disagree with both of my colleagues' statements because, in fact, there is no administrative burden given to the small businesses.

In fact, our bill is doing exactly what the small businesses want, which is to provide direct payments to the businesses—not a tax credit that they get many months in the future but direct payments to them.

I don't think unemployment insurance given to the States is going to result in immediate relief for the employees who need it. Again, you are creating a false structure. Requiring people to quit their jobs so they can care for a child who has been sent from school is absurd. It is far better to have a national paid leave program in this country. And unlike what my colleague said, it is not permanent; it is temporary, and there is no administrative burden.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1559

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the Murray amendment.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 47, nays 51, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 74 Leg.]

YEAS—47

Baldwin	Hassan	Rosen
Bennet	Heinrich	Sanders
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schatz
Booker	Jones	Schumer
Brown	Kaine	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Sinema
Cardin	Klobuchar	Smith
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Manchin	Tester
Coons	Markey	Udall
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Feinstein	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Harris	Reed	

NAYS—51

Alexander	Ernst	Paul
Barrasso	Fischer	Perdue
Blackburn	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hawley	Roberts
Braun	Hoeven	Romney
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Capito	Inhofe	Rubio
Cassidy	Johnson	Sasse
Collins	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Shelby
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Loeffler	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Tillis
Cruz	McSally	Toomey
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Enzi	Murkowski	Young

NOT VOTING—2

Gardner	Scott (FL)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment was rejected.

The amendment (No. 1559) was rejected.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1558

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question occurs on agreeing to amendment No. 1558.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 75 Leg.]

YEAS—50

Alexander	Cotton	Hawley
Barrasso	Cramer	Hoeven
Blackburn	Crapo	Hyde-Smith
Blunt	Cruz	Inhofe
Boozman	Daines	Johnson
Braun	Enzi	Kennedy
Burr	Ernst	Lankford
Capito	Fischer	Lee
Cassidy	Graham	Loeffler
Cornyn	Grassley	Manchin

McConnell	Roberts	Sullivan
McSally	Rounds	Thune
Moran	Rubio	Tillis
Paul	Sasse	Toomey
Perdue	Scott (SC)	Wicker
Portman	Shelby	Young
Risch	Sinema	

NAYS—48

Baldwin	Harris	Reed
Bennet	Hassan	Romney
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Rosen
Booker	Hirono	Sanders
Brown	Jones	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Collins	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Udall
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Feinstein	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Gardner	Scott (FL)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 50, and the nays are 48. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

The amendment (No. 1558) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the third time.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 90, nays 8, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 76 Leg.]

YEAS—90

Alexander	Duckworth	McSally
Baldwin	Durbin	Menendez
Barrasso	Enzi	Merkley
Bennet	Ernst	Moran
Blumenthal	Feinstein	Murkowski
Blunt	Fischer	Murphy
Booker	Gillibrand	Murray
Boozman	Graham	Perdue
Braun	Grassley	Peters
Brown	Harris	Portman
Burr	Hassan	Reed
Cantwell	Hawley	Risch
Capito	Heinrich	Roberts
Cardin	Hirono	Romney
Carper	Hoeven	Rosen
Casey	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Jones	Rubio
Collins	Kaine	Sanders
Coons	Kennedy	Schatz
Cornyn	King	Schumer
Cortez Masto	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cotton	Leahy	Shelby
Cramer	Loeffler	Sinema
Crapo	Manchin	Smith
Cruz	Markey	Stabenow
Daines	McConnell	Sullivan
Tester	Udall	Whitehouse
Thune	Van Hollen	Wicker
Tillis	Warner	Wyden
Toomey	Warren	Young

NAYS—8

Blackburn	Lankford	Sasse
Inhofe	Lee	Scott (SC)
Johnson	Paul	

NOT VOTING—2

Gardner	Scott (FL)

The bill (H.R. 6201) was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, we just passed the bill that came over from the House, and it is on its way to the President. It is a very important first step, which we are calling phase 2.

We continue to work on the next bill to respond to the crisis. I want to repeat again that the Senate is going to stay in session until we finish phase 3, the next bill, and send it over to the House.

Now, Republicans hope, shortly, to have a consolidated position along with the administration. Then we intend to sit down with our Democratic colleagues to see what we can agree to.

I would recommend that Senators stay around, close. Just how long it will take to get through these steps is unclear, but as everyone knows, we are moving rapidly because the situation demands it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, 3 months ago, no one in the country—in fact, no one in the world—had heard the term ''COVID–19.'' The term ''coronavirus'' was around, but most folks didn't use that because it was connected to SARS or to MERS in the past.

In December of 2019, an infection started in China, and it spread rapidly through the Wuhan region. By January, there were thousands of people affected before most of the world even knew it existed. Now, almost every country in the world has infections. We have hundreds of thousands of people who have had contact with this virus, and unfortunately we have lost thousands of people worldwide.

In the United States, the numbers continue to increase as we are continuing to increase the number of people we can actually test. Fortunately, the vast majority of the people who get this virus have little to no symptoms. It is a cold; it is a mild flu to them. But for our vulnerable populations—our elderly populations, those with heart issues, those with lung issues, smokers, diabetics—this can be a very, very serious thing.

The challenge we face in our healthcare is that every person who walks in to get tested is face to face with one of our healthcare workers, especially in rural areas of our State, who may be the only healthcare professional for that entire county. If that person—who has not been vaccinated as well because there is no vaccine yet—is not able to serve the rest of the population, that health situation becomes even worse because of diminishing care.

We, as Americans, have taken this seriously, as we should. We are paying attention. The younger population is spending time trying to get away from other individuals, to self-isolate, to self-quarantine—''social distancing'' is the new term—to find some way to not be close to someone else so they don't accidentally pass the virus on, because although the virus may be within them and they are not personally physically affected much, the effect on someone else could be pretty dramatic. So, out of respect for others, they are trying to manage that distance and be attentive to that.

There have been multiple actions from the government over the past several months. There are the travel bans we all know very much about, starting with China and now in multiple areas of the world, and lots of encouragement to limit gatherings, first to 250 and then to 50 and now to 10. Now it is a series of just keep social distancing, to make sure you are aware of that. There have been emergency declarations.

CMS has changed coverage, as recently as yesterday, dealing with issues like telehealth, making sure individuals who may have other care needs don't have to actually go in to a healthcare professional—for their fear of who else is sitting in the waiting room—but they can get access to telehealth, which is a much needed change.

The FDA has been very aggressive in giving access to different States to do their own testing regimens.

The CDC has been active in trying to get to a point where they can get a testing system that can actually get out to the entire country. The challenge was, early on, many other countries did tests and developed tests with a high false-positive rate. The CDC was very focused on trying to get as accurate as it possibly could. That meant it took longer, and we don't have the tests out. The tests are more accurate, but we don't have the tests in the numbers we need at the moment we needed them, which was last week. So now we are still struggling to catch up on testing all over the country.

Multiple other labs and multiple universities are also coming on board. In

fact—it is interesting—multiple other countries are also developing their own testing processes. In the days ahead, we will be able to catch up on the testing so that any American could be able to get testing, but for now, it is limited.

In States like my State of Oklahoma, where the virus is beginning its acceleration—we were late in actually getting the virus coming to Oklahoma, but now that the virus is there, it starts to accelerate, and testing is exceptionally important to us, as it is to everyone else.

The Department of Transportation is engaged on things like waivers for hours of service to allow the movement of goods all over the country dealing with livestock and with food.

There has been a big push from just about every retailer in the country to make sure they are cleaning facilities more and being open and accessible and having hours early in the morning for those in the most vulnerable populations so they are not shopping with people who may have the virus and don't even know it.

There has been a shift around the country to encourage people to telework or to find ways to separate in their place of work.

All of these things have occurred just in the last few months. Again, 3 months ago, none of us knew this term or this virus existed. All of this is happening extremely rapidly.

Three weeks ago, Congress and the President agreed on a proposal—it was a wide bipartisan proposal—to deal with additional funding for testing, additional funding for vaccine development, additional funding for State and local departments of health to make sure they are taking care of that. My own State of Oklahoma has already received almost $7 million to help with what is happening in our county, and we are in desperate need of those dollars to get that done.

Vaccine development is already in human trials now. It is in phase 1. It will take multiple months to get that done, but we have already begun that process. That is important to us.

The bill that was on the floor today dealt with multiple helpful things. It expands SNAP—what some people still call food stamps, but it is supplemental nutrition. It is assistance for those families. It is an expansion of that.

It also deals with unemployment insurance benefits to make sure those are staying consistent and those get extended to people who are going to need them because in the past week, unemployment has dramatically increased all over the country. In the days ahead, when we see the numbers, we will see the difference between what is happening this week versus the week before versus the week before that.

The struggle is, my phones have been filled with one other element that is in that bill, and that deals with a mandate on small businesses for sick leave. Small businesses in my State are closed. Many retailers and restaurants—many small businesses are really struggling with how they are going to pay for this when they have no income coming in right now. They are hearing the promise of a Federal reimbursement coming to them, but they don't know when that is coming, and they are literally teetering on the edge right now. Their struggle: Please don't do something that pushes us over the edge. We need help, but we don't need a bureaucracy that is going to be slow to respond or a way that is actually going to get us some help but help that comes to us too late.

I have heard these terrifying words from multiple employers: I cannot make it with that structure. I am going to have to lay people off and hope to be able to hire them back when this all ends.

For those families who are laid off and in unemployment now, this is a very different day for them. My fear is that some of what pushed some of those individuals over the edge into unemployment was a nudge to say we are going to add one more mandate to you at your worst possible economic moment.

The first principle we should have as Congress is, do no harm. We need to step in and help those folks who need help. There are lots of ideas being bantered around by the Senate and the House, from both sides of the aisle, to figure out how we can get help as rapidly as we can to as many people as we can.

This is a moment unlike what we have seen before where it is not that the economy is crashing because of some economic foundation that is not there; it is fear and panic that is global, that literally we are struggling with ''what if'' and the CDC and our own governments saying to employers: It would be best if you closed for a season. And they, being good citizens and good neighbors, quite frankly, are complying with that out of fear for their own business and for their own employees.

I finished my day yesterday—late last night—talking to a small business owner in Oklahoma who related to me what he is going through right now and the struggles he is having keeping the doors open. Quite frankly, he was fairly blunt with me to say: The things that are being passed in the bill tomorrow will affect me, but my competitors that are big companies—it doesn't affect them. It is already hard enough for me as a small business to compete with them, and now I have a new mandate on me that is not a mandate on them, and it makes it even harder, and I don't think I will have the cash flow to be able to make this work.

Toward the end of the conversation, he paused and literally began to cry, and he pulled himself together and said: I am having to call people and tell them ''I don't have hours for you next week,'' and these are people I care about.

We need to take action, but we need to take action that helps people keep their jobs, helps people stay employed, and helps us deal with the dip in the economy right now to help them pull back out. My fear is that we didn't do that just now. We might have just made it worse.

There are important things for us to do, and many of those things we are working on this week. We have to get help to as many people as we can, as fast as we can. It is my hope that the Senate will continue to stay in session—as the leader has already said and promised that it would—until we actually come to some proposals where we have wide bipartisan agreement that can get help rapidly to the people who need the help the most: those workers, those individuals who are struggling, the folks who are hourly, those folks who are waiters and waitresses, those folks who work at the coffee shop and own the coffee shop, and those folks in retail locations that are shut down. They need us to stand with them, and this is our moment to do it. Let's do it together.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I want to start my remarks by saying to the people of Massachusetts and families all across the country: Many of you are making big sacrifices—quarantining yourselves, postponing or canceling major events, dealing with closed schools and daycare. We are grateful.

Right now, our primary goal needs to be to slow the spread of this virus, and we all share in that responsibility. So we thank you for everything you are doing to keep your loved ones and everyone else's loved ones safe at this time.

We are at war with the coronavirus, and we need a massive wartime manufacturing mobilization for coronavirus testing kits and personal protective equipment for medical personnel and emergency responders. That is why, last weekend, I was the first to call on President Trump to immediately use existing authorities under the Defense Production Act to bring all of the power of the Federal Government to bear in mobilizing industry to meet this crisis. It is why I authored the Senate resolution calling on him to do so. It is why I spoke directly to Vice President PENCE yesterday to urge the administration to take this critical action, and I am glad they are doing so.

The Defense Production Act allows the Federal Government to direct supplies of critical materials and equipment that our hospitals and first responders need. It allows us to mobilize industry to expand production and gives us the power to coordinate industry to respond to this crisis. We need to fully use all of those powers that are provided under this law.

That is why I am so glad President Trump has today invoked the power of the Defense Production Act to respond to the coronavirus crisis. I am glad he is exercising it. I am glad that after my conversation yesterday with Vice President PENCE, they decided to put this on the agenda for our country.

We need to massively increase private production of the lifesaving personal protective equipment, medical supplies and devices, and diagnostic testing supplies we need to combat this viral enemy. We need to activate our capable and talented domestic industry and bring the full weight of the Federal Government behind this effort.

We are talking about gowns, gloves, face shields, surgical masks, N95 respirators, ventilators, disinfectant wipes, and hand sanitizers. We do not have nearly enough of this lifesaving equipment.

For instance, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that the United States could need up to 3.5 billion respirator masks. Let me say that again. Our own Department of Health and Human Services says that we could need upwards of 3.5 billion respirator masks. But our strategic national stockpile, the country's emergency medical supply bank, holds only a tiny fraction of that, just 12 million respirator masks—not 3.5 billion but 12 million.

The medical community calls this personal protective equipment ''PPE,'' but ''PPE'' also stands for a ''promise to protect everyone,'' and this is a promise we should make and keep for our hospital personnel, first responders, and patients. Invoking the powers of the Defense Production Act will help ensure that we can keep this promise to our American heroes who are on the frontlines of battling this epidemic.

I have been in regular contact with the Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association and the Massachusetts Nurses Association, and both have issued a terrible alarm: There are insufficient medical equipment and supplies to test and treat affected individuals and protect healthcare workers and first responders. For example, the Berkshire hospital told me that they required 3,500 respirator masks a day. That is 35,000 in just 10 days for the Berkshire hospital, which is in the least populated part of our State—for just that one smaller hospital. Yet the entire State of Massachusetts recently received only 70,000 of these respirator masks. That is not nearly enough. We do not want our nurses and our doctors reusing or rationing masks.

Additionally, hospitals and labs across the Nation are trying to ramp up testing capacity but face shortages in test kits and supplies. But we need to dramatically scale up testing and ensure our continued ability to test. Our Nation must be able to conduct tens or hundreds of thousands of tests daily, ultimately testing millions of people over the course of our response. That means producing swabs, which we are now running short of, and other testing materials.

We have used the Defense Production Act before—during the Korean war—to mobilize defense infrastructure and during the Cold War. Make no mistake, we are facing an equally deadly enemy in this virus, and we need to bring all of our authority and resources to bear to defeat it.

All of us owe a debt of gratitude to our frontline health and medical care workforce. They don't have a roadmap for what is happening right now. It is unprecedented. They just have skills, a commitment, and the hearts of heroes. We owe them the resources they need to be protected in order to do their jobs.

Sadly, this pandemic is going to get worse before it gets better. I had been calling for the President to declare a national emergency, which he finally did last week. Now that he has done so, we need Massachusetts to get all of the funding that is due. I have been in regular contact with Governor Baker and Mayor Walsh, and I will support their requests for Federal resources.

As the Senate works on an economic relief package that matches the scale of this crisis, we need to ensure that we put people and family first—no half measures, no hidden bailouts and giveaways just to big corporations: paid sick time for all workers; unemployment insurance for all workers, including for tipped workers, gig workers, contractors, home workers; expansion of SNAP, WIC, and other food security programs; no evictions, no cutting off of utilities, no cutting off of Wi-Fi; halting all deportations and releasing of detained immigrants who pose no threat to public safety; provide free Wi-Fi to low-income households with students who cannot afford it but are going to be at home because of school closures so that we don't have a huge homework gap that now explodes in our country, as poorer children don't have access to the Wi-Fi technology at home, so they can learn at the same pace that kids who just happen to live in wealthier families will have. We cannot allow that to happen. These kids should be able to learn at home, regardless of their income. We need free Wi-Fi for those kids. We have to reimburse our States and cities and Tribes. They are bearing the brunt of this crisis, and they need resources immediately.

My commitment to protecting the health professionals, ensuring the consumers, workers, and families of Massachusetts get relief from the impacts of the coronavirus is my No. 1 priority. We have to protect the small businesses in our country. We have to make sure they receive the resources they need. Millions and millions of small businesses right now are feeling enormous stress. We have to make it possible for them to receive the relief they need, the help they need in order to survive, and we have to put upfront whatever the capacity is to make sure they get the resources they need. If that system in our country, where 48 percent of all workers are employed—small businesses in our country—and they are living on the margin, then we are going to have an economic catastrophe by August or September where millions of these small businesses will just declare bankruptcy. That is the bottom-line economic fact of the matter. We have to give them help, and we have to make sure we have the resources inside the Federal Government—the personnel—that will ensure we can deliver that relief too.

To the people of Massachusetts, I want you to know I am here for you, and I will help any of you individually who need any assistance during this emergency. This current moment may call for distancing and isolation, but we cannot and should not sever our basic human connections to one another because we are all in this together.

I want to end with the most important remark. We must continue to listen to the guidance of scientists and medical professionals. This pandemic is unprecedented and will require an unprecedented mobilization and response at every level of society. We can get through this, but it will require a commitment from every single one of us. We are one big family in the United States. Many families are going to be suffering. It is going to be our job to make sure that we protect those families, and it is the job of this institution to do so. We are the legislative first responders. We are the ones who have to provide the resources that then allow the first responders, the families in every community across our country to have the resources to help everyone in our society. That is our goal.

A pandemic should know no partisanship. Let us come together and produce the big package our country right now so desperately needs.

With that, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, thank you very much. This has been a trying and difficult and challenging time in our country and in my home State of Kansas. There are lots of conversations, care, and compassion going on. We can't give anybody a hug these days. We can't extend a hand—at least literally—but we are extending a hand to all of our friends and our neighbors—those across our community, those across our State, and across the country.

I am troubled, of course, by what circumstances Americans find themselves in. There are those who are in a poor circumstance in which they can recover from the circumstances that we face. I want to make sure that Kansans know that we hear their cries, that we know of their problems, and that work is afoot to try to make a difference.

Just a couple of examples of things that perhaps, in the overall scale of where we are, don't seem significant enough but can make a difference in individual lives and families' well-being: We have been successful to this point in getting the school lunch program available for students whose schools are no longer in session, who don't go to the classroom, and therefore aren't in the school lunchroom. The USDA and the school food program are now available for those who are at home because their school classes have been canceled as a result of the virus.

We are paying a lot of attention, as I hope Kansans know and Americans know, to the veteran and the veteran community. We have had success in passing legislation on the Senate floor—waiting for House consideration—that will allow those veterans who are no longer in the classroom, in a university, or in a technical college and are now learning by distance education, by technology, to be able to continue to receive their GIeducational benefits. That required a change in the law, and it is in the works so that those benefits continue, even though the student is not, as now required, in a classroom itself.

We are trying to make sure the Department of Veterans Affairs has the resources necessary to meet the needs of our veterans. It is a vulnerable population because of the age and existing condition of many of our veterans. We are in constant contact not only with the Department of Veterans Affairs but with veterans themselves and with our veteran hospitals and clinics and other healthcare providers in Kansas.

Today, we are dealing with economic relief for those who are losing their job, fearful of losing their job, or have already lost their job. Much of life's meaning comes from our employment, from what we do. A job is certainly something that helps put food on a family's table and provides some security for an individual, but it also provides meaning. No one can understand, unless they are without a job, how devastating that can be.

I am pleased by the number of business men and women who have called me to tell me the last thing they want to do is lay off anyone who works in their business. We have been through economic difficulties before. We have seen the cycle of the economy, the ups and downs, the normal flows, but this is something totally different from that.

Oil and gas—the price of oil is such that keeping our oil and gas producers in Kansas in business is a real challenge. Aviation manufacturing is an important component of the Kansas economy, and today Textron industries, which manufactures Cessna aircraft and Beechcraft, announced they are furloughing 7,000 of their 9,000 workers. That is on top of other challenges in the aviation industry in which Spirit AeroSystems, headquartered in Kansas, has already laid off 2,800 employees.

From the oil and gas industry of Western and South Central and Eastern Kansas to the manufacturing hub of Wichita and South Central Kansas, the consequences of the coronavirus are real and felt in the pocketbook, felt in the brain, and felt in the heart. Our restaurants, hotels, our car rental agencies, and those who serve others—I have been in circumstances this week in visiting with the people who work at a restaurant, the people who work at a cafe, the people who work here in Washington, DC, at the cafeteria where I had breakfast this morning. Those who have jobs wonder if they are going to have jobs tomorrow, and those who have already lost jobs wonder how they are going to pay the bills.

This morning I had a conversation with an optometrist telling me the circumstances of no longer being able to care for patients except in the emergency setting, which means that the business in the optometrist office—an important healthcare provider—and the business in the dental office has been curtailed, and the necessity of considering laying off the clinical workers there is front and center in that conversation.

It is a troublesome situation across Kansas. It does not matter what city or town you live in. If you are a farmer, the cattle prices today are significantly depressed, despite the fact that it is still pretty expensive at the grocery store.

I think about my hometown and the loss of a business. There aren't many businesses in many rural communities in Kansas, and many businesses don't really earn much of a living or a profit. It could be a family circumstance; it could be this is what they did; this is what their parents did; this could be a service to the community; and they live on a lot less because that business is important to a small community. But this kind of challenge is such that if that business closes, the chances are that it will not reopen. The financial circumstances of smalltown America are such that there is little likelihood of recovery and reopening.

The legislation we passed today is now on its way to the President. It included a few things that I was troubled by and think will create significant difficulties for some. We need to continue to work to change those provisions that are troublesome and cause problems. But it was important in my view to make certain the things that were wrong in that bill didn't prevent us from passing something to help those with the things that are right. None of our economic efforts that we have to make certain people feel more secure economically will work until they feel more secure in the health and well-being of themselves and their families.

Even though you may get some assistance—a person may get some assistance, a family may be relieved of some of the financial burdens they now face, a laid-off worker may get unemployment benefits—your mind is always going to be on the issue of your health and the well-being of your children and your parents and your grandparents, those we know in the nursing home and those we know in the nursery. And as long as we are troubled by what may happen to us and our health, no amount of economic stimulus can overcome the fear of one's well-being and particularly the well-being of their spouse, their children, and their parents.

So clearly economic relief in and of itself, in my view, is insufficient. We need to make certain that our healthcare providers have the necessary tools to meet the healthcare needs of American citizens. Front and center in that regard is testing, and we are woefully inadequate and undersupplied in what we need to test the necessary number of Kansans and Americans to know what they face and to know what their circumstances are and to respond in the medically required way.

We are working to make sure there are more tests across the country and working to make certain those tests are distributed in a way that Kansans and their healthcare providers can access them. Most recently, we were successful in getting CDC to undo a problem that kept tests from being transferred to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment in my home State. We are pleased to see that the FDA, for example, has modified the necessary steps it takes for a manufacturer of these test kits to be certified to be qualified to manufacture them. And the amount of test kits that are being produced, the amount of manufacturing has increased, and we are expecting significant improvements in the next couple of weeks. Yes, I wish they were here earlier, but can we fix the problem we face now and get them here soon, immediately?

I sit in the desk of Senator Bob Dole, a predecessor of mine in Kansas—his name is etched in this desk drawer—now known for his bipartisanship and held in great respect not only at home in Kansas but across the country. I stand at the desk that is here in the place of Senator John McCain. These are two people who demonstrated the desire to work together.

While I have outlined a few things that I think are important, and I wanted Kansans to know, the mission in my remarks today—maybe the most important—is to ask my Republican colleagues and my Democratic colleagues to set aside the usual bickering and political posturing that takes place in the U.S. Congress. No American can feel well, no American can feel that things are going to be OK if they don't see leadership and cooperation among us.

So while we today are preparing for the presentation of new legislation dealing with the challenges that businesses, employers, and employees face, trying to relieve the economic and financial burden that many Americans

are experiencing and more will experience in the future, could Americans please see that I and my colleagues are taking every step not to make this a political exercise but to demonstrate our care and concern for those we represent.

I mentioned a moment ago about veterans. This is the point in time in which, if you take a walk on the National Mall, as I have often done, to walk to the Lincoln Memorial, I will walk by now the World War II Memorial; I will walk by the Vietnam Wall; and on my return, I will walk by the Korean War Memorial. We should hold those veterans—those military men and women who are honored in those settings—as our role models. We should do that every day, but could we please do it over the next few weeks, the next few months, and into the next year as we try to address the challenges that America faces today. No person memorialized in those settings fought and sacrificed their life for a Republican or for a Democrat. They sacrificed because they believed they could make life better for the folks back home—their own family members, their neighbors, and people they didn't know. They sacrificed because they believed they could make the world a more safe and secure place. I pledge myself in every way possible to see that I do the things today, tomorrow, and into the future that mean that this Congress has come together on behalf of the American people, just like those who served our country did and now rest in peace.

To the Democratic colleagues here in the Senate, please consider me open to their suggestions. And to my Republican colleagues, please know that I am an ally in the things that we believe in. But we may all need to give a little so America can return, Americans can be safe, Americans can be secure, our health is protected, and our economy flourishing.

I would ask God in these circumstances to bless this country, to bring us together, hold us in his arms in a way that we can't do today, and to make certain that this Congress represents the will of the people, not the will of any political party.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I ask unanimous consent to speak for as much time as I may require.

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I congratulate the Senator from Kansas on his eloquent remarks, expressing the feelings—certainly mine and those, I believe, of virtually every Member of this body—that we are here not as Democrats or Republicans but to work together to do whatever we can to address the concerns that are literally unprecedented.

This is an unprecedented time in our country. I cannot remember a time in my life or in our history when the government has literally closed down the country in order to contain a disease. That is literally what we are doing. Whether it is the Federal Government by its travel restrictions, or whether it is the State governments suggesting that schools be closed, or whether it is mayors saying that restaurants must be closed, we are closing down the country to contain a disease. Because the government is doing that on behalf of all the people, we are going to have to pay the costs of closing down the country to contain this disease.

Today, the news is that the auto industry across the country is closing down, at least temporarily. There are layoffs.

I have watched over the last 40 years as Tennessee has gone from almost no auto jobs to proudly calling itself, in many ways, the No. 1 auto State. One hundred forty thousand Tennesseans work in auto jobs in Tennessee; that is one-third of all of our manufacturing jobs. They are spread through 88 counties. And over these 40 years as textiles and other industries moved away from the United States and out of our State, the auto companies moved in—virtually into every county—and our family incomes went up. So if we are, in many ways, the No. 1 auto State, then we are the No. 1 State to be hurt when the auto plants begin to close.

We are also hurt, as are citizens in every State, when the restaurants shut down. Fifteen million Americans work in restaurants. It is one of our largest industries, if not our largest industry. Almost all of those workers are being laid off in Tennessee and in many other places in the country and even more will be.

Not all of those affected are working for big auto companies or medium-sized restaurants. I received an email yesterday from friends in Tennessee who run a kennel. Well, you may say that is not so important. Well, it is important to a lot of us. They say:

> We are . . . suffering a massive drop off in our business as a result of the Coronavirus. I fear we may have to close our doors for a month or two (hopefully not that long), as our wonderful customers are forced to curtail travel. I am currently trying to secure around $50,000 in loans to supplement our dwindling reserves to see us through until May [or] June. I am currently applying . . . for SBA disaster relief. This precipitous drop in business comes on the heels of major flood damages to our fencing [caused] by the [recent] floods . . . our flood insurance refuses to cover [that]. We are not seeking charity, just a business loan from $30,000 [to] $50,000 to secure our business until it passes. We always pay our way.

This couple has two young children and maybe a couple of employees in their kennel. They are awfully good people. They are salt-of-the-earth Tennesseans. They are like many Americans who are suddenly confronted with this disease that just came out of the blue and has caused our government to shut our country down.

Now, what shall we do about it?

Well, a couple of weeks ago, Congress and the President reacted with $8.3 billion to help beef up our public health system. We have the best public health system in the world, and we wanted to help it get started.

Today, we passed a bill that some people have estimated at $100 billion, which includes a whole variety of other steps from Democrats and Republicans that includes encouraging more testing, that creates a new system of paid leave for businesses of less than 500 employees, and family leave.

As Senator MCCONNELL said, we are going to stay here this week until we take step 3. And step 3, according to the President's proposal, would include direct financial payments to Americans; it would include support for essential businesses that need stabilization like the airlines; and it would include loans to small businesses so they can keep their employees working. Perhaps that proposal would be good for that small kennel I talked about.

That is said to cost perhaps another trillion dollars. A trillion dollars is a lot of money, even in the United States. Our gross domestic product is about $22.3 trillion. We have 25 percent of all the money in the world in this country just for 5 percent of the people. But the idea that we would have to spend a trillion dollars or more to contain a disease would be unthinkable a few weeks ago, but what we have learned very quickly is we are going to have to pay the cost of containing the disease because the way we are containing it is that the government is shutting down major parts of our economy. I don't believe that what we do today or what we propose to do later in the week will be enough because, as I look at the number of people being laid off in this country, our State unemployment agencies are not going to be able to deal with that.

In Tennessee, for example, where unemployment has been very low and where people have found it easy to find a job, there were only 2,000 applications for unemployment insurance last week, but already this week by 2 p.m. on Wednesday, in the middle of the week, there were four times that many applications, 9,177. If you are successful in unemployment compensation in our State, you get $257 per week for 26 weeks.

So we are going to have to do even more than the Congress has done, even more than the President has done, and I think we have to recognize that the President was wise on January 31, when we only had six cases of coronavirus detected in the United States, to impose the strictest travel bans on people coming into our country in 50 years. Dr. Fauci, whom all of us respect, said if he hadn't done that, we would have many more cases today.

Still, we have a disease that is causing the governments—this one, the State government, the local government—to shut major parts of our economy down. That is why I voted today

for the legislation that was phase 2 in our effort to respond to that, even though I have significant issues with the sick leave and family leave proposals that are part of it. I believe those provisions, while well-intended by the administration and by the House of Representatives, will hurt many employers and will shortchange many employees.

First, to be fair, I want to try to make sure that what the Treasury intends to do is on the record. I have had several conversations with the Secretary of the Treasury and with other officials to ask them just what they intended to do and to list the problems that I had. So here is what they say—and I am characterizing the conversations and the writings we have had.

They pointed out that what many businesses have read is in this bill was what was in the draft of it that the House passed on Friday before technical corrections were made over the weekend and that the technical corrections greatly improved the bill from the point of view of employers.

The Treasury Department writes that, under the legislation, employers receive a dollar-for-dollar refundable tax credit for the COVID–19-related sick and family leave payments made to their employees. As amended—they made the technical corrections over the weekend—the credit is carefully calibrated, in the Treasury's words, to ensure that there is no sick or family leave requirement in excess of the credit. The legislation now also includes explicit grants of regulatory authority to both the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of the Treasury to ensure consistency between the leave requirements and the credit provisions.

In addition—and this is what the Treasury officials have been saying to us over the last few days—the legislation now provides that the sick and family leave payments are not considered wages for employment tax purposes. The legislation now extends the employer credit to include costs for the maintenance of health benefits that are paid by the employers while employees are on leave.

Lastly, the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service are considering options to provide an advance payment for the refundable credit to ease any tax flow burden that a small fraction of employers may experience. I will have more to say about that in a minute, but in plain English, what that means is that they are considering a way to make sure that, before the employer has to pay this required family leave to an employee, the Federal Government has given the money to the employer.

Besides this, the legislation now includes an explicit grant of authority, the Treasury writes, to the Secretary of Labor to exempt small businesses from the only long-term leave requirements it contains where those requirements would result in financial hardship.

In its conversations with me and in the writings that it has sent out, the Treasury makes the argument that, far from imposing special burdens, the net effect of this legislation is to provide an important benefit given that many already provide sick leave and that many more will need to do so in response to the COVID–19 outbreak. Moreover, by structuring coverage for paid sick leave as a credit, the legislation ensures that employers generally receive relief immediately rather than having to wait for refunds.

In the event the amount of the credit exceeds an employer's tax liability, the credit is made refundable to ensure that the employer is fully compensated for all payments made under the leave requirements. The Treasury goes on to write that the Treasury and the IRS are working on options to provide an advance payment of the credit in order to get cash in the pockets of small businesses and their employees immediately.

The intent of the legislation, the Treasury argues, is to fully fund the payments employers make to their employees who experience employment interruptions related to the COVID–19.

In summary, according to the Department of the Treasury, the amended legislation does not require employers to make payments in excess of amounts eligible for the refundable tax credit and does not require employers to pay employment taxes on those amounts. To the contrary, it provides an important and immediate benefit to small businesses and their employees for whom financial assistance is needed as quickly as possible. That has been the argument of the Secretary of the Treasury and his subordinates in conversations with many of us over the last few days. That is their intention.

Now, I read that in detail because, in the Dakotas, in Tennessee, and in many places all across this country, if my figures are right, there are about 6 million businesses that could be affected by this mandate, businesses that employ 51 million employees—or at least that did employ 51 million employees until all of the problems that have been created by this virus.

In my having tried to be fair in giving you what I understand the Treasury's intention to be, which I think will be useful to the owners of small businesses, to their accountants, and to their lawyers, who are trying to figure out the law that was passed today, here are my problems with it.

No. 1, I am not sure that the Treasury can live up to its promise to make sure that the employer has the money from the Federal Government before the employer has to pay the sick leave to the employee.

Here is my principle. I think, in these circumstances, sick leave and family leave are a good idea. I mean, if someone is quarantined for 2 weeks, I think all of us should have to pay the cost of that and, for another 10 weeks, some of the cost of the medical and family leave. I buy that, and I can support that. Yet I believe, if Washington, DC, is going to require it, Washington, DC, should pay for it. If Washington, DC, is going to require a small business—many of which are struggling and many of which are going out of business—to pay a mandate, Washington, DC, should pay for it.

This is no time to be imposing on small businesses an expensive, new mandate—an unexpected new cost—when they don't have money coming in to pay for the normal costs that they had. I know it is the Secretary's goal to let it work this way, for he has told me this, and he has told all of us this. He has said it in public and has put out a statement.

Under the sick leave proposal, every couple of weeks, a businessman will put aside enough money for withholding and social security taxes. That adds up to about 15 percent of an employee's salary. What the Treasury is saying is that the employer can use that money. Instead of setting it aside for the government, the employer can use it to pay sick leave.

There are two problems with that. One is that I don't like the idea of the employer's using the employee's tax money. You usually get in trouble for that. If I were to set aside the Senator from North Dakota's tax payment and then use it for some purpose, you could go to jail for that in some cases. At least it is inappropriate. I am uncomfortable with that. A business might only have 7.5 percent of the salary set aside for that purpose, but even if it is 15 percent, I am not sure it is enough.

The Treasury Secretary said the Treasury understands that, so it will allow advance payment, and it hopes that it can come up with a system that would get it there immediately. He hasn't promised that it would come in 1 day. I am sure, if he were here on the Senate floor, he would like to say his objective would be to get it there on the same day. Well, wanting to get it there on the same day and getting it there are two different things.

If I am a small business person in Tennessee and know that I am going to have to cut a payroll check on Monday and that I have no money coming in to pay for it and that there is not enough money in my escrow account to pay for it, I would want my money from the Federal Government before I would cut the check.

So I intend to try to amend the legislation that we passed this weekend to say that, with sick leave and paid family leave, since Washington is requiring it and Washington is paying for it, then Washington will need to make sure the employer has the money before the employer has to write the check. That is No. 1.

No. 2, I want to make sure that the employer doesn't have to pay more on sick leave than the Federal Government's cap. There is a cap that, I think, is about $132,000 annualized pay on sick leave. If an employee makes more than that, that employee is going to have to take a pay cut or he or she

might use the private right of action to sue the employer and say: I want you to pay the gap between the $132,000 and whatever I made.

You may say, I am not too sympathetic to the employee who makes that much money. Yet I am not talking about being sympathetic to the employee; I am talking about being sympathetic to the employer who may not have any money. Remember, this is a Washington mandate, and Washington should pay for it. Through technical changes this past weekend—and it said so in the information I just read—the Treasury Department has amended the bill to try to make that clear, and I hope that it is successful.

No. 3 is with regard to layoffs, and I mentioned the restaurant industry. There are 15 million people who work in the restaurant industry. If they are not laid off now, they are going to be mostly all laid off before very long. Unfortunately, none of those men and women who have been laid off are eligible for this sick leave because you are going to have to work for 30 days for this small business, for this company with fewer than 500 employees, in order to be eligible for the paid sick leave.

I am afraid, as a result of this, many employers who are worried about this provision may have an incentive to lay off more of their employees. The truth is that one doesn't need much more incentive because you are a restaurant and have been told by the local health board to close down. You don't have any money coming in, and you can't pay your employees anyway, so you don't have any choice. My point is that this is a very limited benefit in the restaurant industry and, probably, in many other industries because it does not help the laid-off employee.

Finally, there has been a lot said with regard to the smallest companies—those with fewer than 50 employees—in that they can apply to the Secretary of Labor and he will make you exempt from the mandate. I think that is a good idea because this is the small mom-and-pop diner or it might be the kennel that I just talked about that might have three or four employees and that is not accustomed to dealing with all of this Washington legalese and its requirements and regulations. It is not geared up for that.

As I read the language in the law, it is a much narrower exception than that, so I am going to attempt to amend the law that passed today in order to broaden the exception so the Secretary of Labor has more authority to waive the mandate for businesses with fewer than 50 employees.

As I said, there are a number of important benefits in the bill that we passed today, especially on testing. We have seen a great increase in the number of available tests over the last few weeks. The Governor of Tennessee said yesterday that we have sufficient testing. Well, that is for today but maybe not for tomorrow or the next day.

One of the greatest steps forward has been to finally allow commercial testing to be used. I mean, why shouldn't the Mayo Clinic or the Cleveland Clinic be able to go ahead and develop tests and move ahead with them? Now, they can. While we have done a great deal, there is a great deal more that we must do.

I am convinced, even if we do as Senator MCCONNELL has said and pass our phase three legislation this weekend, which would include loans to small businesses, direct payments to individuals, and stabilizing payments to airlines, for example, and maybe to other industries, that there is more to do.

My guess is that the next step after that—phase four, let's call it—will be to look to our State employment compensation systems and make sure they are able to handle the large numbers of people who are losing their jobs because the government is shutting down the economy in order to contain the disease.

I voted for the Johnson amendment today, which was to the bill for which I later voted, because I thought it was headed in the right direction. Rather than Washington's issuing mandates, I would rather Washington work with the States in an existing program and make sure that States have sufficient funding on top of their own funds to deal with the large numbers of autoworkers, restaurant workers, and workers at the small kennel that has two or three employees. In addition to that, I believe the figure in the weekly fund is going to have to be higher than the $327 that it is in Tennessee.

This is unprecedented. We are closing down the economy in order to contain the disease. Because we are doing that, we governments at all levels are going to have to pay the bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The Senator from Delaware.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, the Senate of the United States has just acted. It has taken up and passed a roughly $104 billion package of assistance that will go out to American families, to American workers, to our healthcare system, to our States, and to our communities. I want to take a few minutes to talk about this important step we have just taken and where we have to go next.

The Delawareans I have heard from today and this week and this month are worried, and they are anxious. They have been up all night and are trying to figure out how they are going to care for their children who are home from school and need support and instruction and how they are going to care for their parents who are vulnerable and elderly and sick. They are concerned about our hospitals and our healthcare system and its capacity.

They are anxious because they are frontline workers, they are first responders, and they are volunteer firefighters, nurses, and orderlies, who are exposed every day and concerned. They are just average citizens asking: How can I get a test and where?

I have heard from the presidents of our major universities, the head of our hospital system, our Governor, and my colleagues in our congressional delegation. We have talked repeatedly to our director of public health, our secretary of health and human services, and I have heard from business owners, large and small, who run everything from coffee shops and diners to restaurants and hotels in our State. There is a lot of anxiety and concern.

The folks in my State want to know that we here in Washington are going to put the partisan bickering aside, find answers, and get resources out to deal with this significant public health emergency.

And so I hope folks take some encouragement from today's actions. It passed 90 to 8. Very little passes in this Senate 90 to 8, and I have very rarely seen a bill of this size, scope, and magnitude that goes from an idea to bill text, to enactment in such a short period of time, but this moment demands it.

Let me talk through, also, the priorities that are reflected in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, because the name reflects the priorities.

Hubert Humphrey, who is a former leader in the United States in our political community and system, once said, ''The moral test of our government is how it treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped.''

I am pleased that the package just passed here in the Senate takes important strides to take care of exactly those folks. Children home from school, who need support for learning remotely, and those, in particular, who rely on school lunch programs for their one good, stable healthy meal a day, will be able to continue to get school lunches delivered, either through their schools or at home. There are significant resources in this bill for that. Those who are on the frontlines of this crisis, the individuals who are cleaning offices and cleaning hospital rooms and cleaning Amtrak cars and public buses, those who are putting themselves directly at risk by cleaning the spaces we all count on for our society, frontline workers, people who are in our first responder community, people who are working in our hospital emergency rooms—this provides support for them.

And for anyone who is concerned about the cost of access to testing, this bill makes clear that testing for COVID–19, for this dreaded disease caused by the novel coronavirus, will have a test for free, including those without health insurance.

There are some big pieces in this bill that I will briefly mention. There is paid emergency leave for workers at companies below 500 employees for 2

weeks of sick leave and up to 10 weeks of additional paid family and medical leave. We just had a disagreement over exactly how that is going to get paid for and how it is going to get compensated and on what timeline, and we are going to work out those details.

My office's website will have an accessible, readable summary of what is in this bill up later tonight.

The larger point was that we thought it essential that folks who we want to stay home, but who are maybe living paycheck to paycheck, know that they will get paid sick leave so they can stay home and we can slow the spread of this disease.

There is also an increase in funds from the Federal Government to States for Medicaid, because a lot of our States are going to see increased costs as folks move to Medicaid as the place they get healthcare as they move to unemployment. One hundred million dollars in additional resources will go to the State of Delaware alone to provide support for those who may be newly dependent on Medicaid.

Then, last is an expansion of unemployment benefits—26 weeks of unemployment benefits, including temporary unemployment caused because of COVID–19.

There are more details as to how this temporary unemployment insurance will work, but it will last longer and have a higher level of benefit and be more flexible than previous versions of Federal unemployment insurance, and it is being delivered in partnership with States.

So those are the biggest pieces of this bill. It is just $104 billion, but the bill we are already hard at work on will be an order of magnitude greater, likely more than $1 trillion. If what we have seen in terms of anxiety and concern from families up and down my State and all over our country is any indication, we must take this up quickly and enact it.

There are small business owners, whom I have heard from today, who want to keep employing the folks who work for them but have lost half of their business since our Governor took the bold and necessary step of closing our restaurants and bars to all except drive-through and delivery service. Ten percent of the folks who work in Delaware work in restaurants and hospitality. Folks who want to keep their people on payroll but have no work for them to do face a very hard choice.

We need to find ways that we can both defer the payments that are necessary for students, for homeowners, for businesses, for those who have outstanding payments on SBA loans or on federally guaranteed mortgages or on bank loans where we can work out some way to provide temporary relief, and then individual payments that will help students, that will help heads of households, and that will help individuals.

So there are a lot of different pieces that are being debated and discussed here in the Senate—support for Amtrak, a priority for me because I commute by Amtrak and it is one of the biggest modes of transportation on the east coast; support for the airline and hospitality industries because they employ hundreds of thousands of people and have seen their business drop off sharply; support for long-term structural changes to how we provide access to healthcare, access to skills and training for our workforce, and access to higher education.

I have heard very concerning stories from the folks who lead some of the most important nonprofit and faith and educational institutions in my State, and they are looking to us for bold and decisive leadership.

Last, we must not forget those on the margins of our society—people who are homeless, people who are incarcerated, people who are uninsured, people who are undocumented. If we want to make sure that we make our country safe, we need to practice not just good hygiene, not just social distancing, but we need to refrain from moral distancing. We need to remember the words of Hubert Humphrey, and we need to be reminded exactly why people look to this Federal Government for prompt action and for significant resources: It is because they look for us to be able to make sure that we see all Americans and that we know that we are all in this together.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I have so appreciated the comments of my colleagues today as they have come to the floor and they have talked about how they are approaching what is happening with this coronavirus pandemic and what they are hearing from the citizens of their States.

I know each of us is spending our day listening to the people in our States and listening to their concerns and hearing them say: As you look at how you are going to address this, don't forget about us. Don't forget about us—whether it is independent contractors who are working in the music industry or television producers—I was talking to one last night; they lost $9,000 worth of production work this week—or theme park owners who are trying to figure out how they are going to work through this or the CEO of one of our Nation's airlines earlier today. People are looking to us to make certain that we address this situation in a way that is going to stabilize it and that is going to provide assistance.

As we have worked through this, one of the things I think sometimes is just a really good thing to do is to stop and kind of take stock of where we are and how it is going to be best to move forward.

I think it is important to realize that we have already directed resources to the coronavirus pandemic. There is the coronavirus supplemental, which was an $8.3 billion piece of legislation. That may seem like a lifetime ago to some of those in our States. It was a couple of weeks ago. That money is already making its way out. Tennessee received $10 million this week in order to work on public health needs around the coronavirus.

We also had our President move forward without hesitation to do the national emergency declaration. That freed up $50 billion of resources. That is money that is going to our States and our localities to help with the response for this, to get those resources where they need to go.

Of course, there was legislation that passed today, and in that, I supported the Johnson amendment. I do fully believe that working through this with our unemployment insurance and our employment security system is the way to go. I have supported the payroll tax holiday. I am one of those who have always said: Why should we have to pay the government to hire somebody? So the payroll tax holiday made sense to me. The Johnson amendment that I cosponsored makes sense to me, that we could do it because we could more quickly get resources to individuals, from the Federal Government to the taxpayer, to the individual. That is what we need to do at this time.

Tennessee is very blessed. We have had a very low unemployment rate. But what we have seen in the last 2 or 3 weeks is that unemployment claims have quadrupled, and we expect this is going to continue as workers, independent contractors, sole proprietors, and small businesses see their income stream or their revenue stream go from something healthy to zero. That has happened literally overnight, just within a few days as the economy started to shut down.

What we hear from people is, look, this is not something we have done, it is something that has been done to us, and we are being asked to close our doors and to change the way we operate. So they repeatedly say: Don't forget about us, and do not give us mandates we cannot afford, because what we need is assistance to bridge that gap.

When we talk about mandates that you can't afford, Tennesseans are very concerned about the paid family leave provisions that are in the legislation today. What I have heard repeatedly—repeatedly—whether it is someone who runs a nursing staffing company or a furniture store or a small manufacturing company, is that the tax credit provision is not going to work with cash flow. They mention that repeatedly. So my hope is that we can come together on a bipartisan basis and we

can address the concerns that are there around that because we want our small businesses to keep those doors open and to return to health and vitality. We need to listen to what they are saying, which is, help to stabilize, to assist us and to help us bridge this divide so that we can come back.

We also need to be listening to our nonprofits that are saying the same thing about the family leave provisions and their concerns there.

You know, we have to bear in mind that all of these employers really care for and value their employees. They want to do right by them. They want to do right by their communities. And certainly they want to do right by the country. But they need our listening ears, and they need our attention.

Another thing that has come up that is of concern that was in the legislation that cleared the Chamber today is the Medicaid expansion provisions and the way it affects the non-expansion States. It adversely impacts States like Tennessee that were non-expansion States. There are some definitional changes that need to be made in that provision so that we are not adversely impacting these States.

For our Tennessee business owners and employers, this is a very tedious and emotional time. I talked with an employer last night who laid off 20 people at a small business. They had to do it in order to keep the doors open. But what they all tell me is that they are really very grateful that the President, the Vice President, and the task force are focused on getting the virus under control, getting the response from our country under control, and making certain that we address the economic and financial impact of this. They know that it is going to be a long way back on this one, that there isn't a quick fix. They realize that the way this all happened had to do with China and China knowing in December that they had a virus, that they had a problem. Knowing that China has lied to us; they kept hidden information; they have not been forthcoming; they did not make the viral sample available to us in a timely manner; and that lack of transparency is something that they point to and they say that we are all in this fight together, we want to make certain that China does not have the ability to take down our economy or take down our healthcare system.

It is one of the reasons—two of the provisions that I have that will come before us are provisions that are focused on, one, bringing our production of pharmaceuticals back to the United States. Senator MENENDEZ has joined me in this provision, and it is the SAM-C bill—Securing America's Medicine Cabinet, the SAM-C legislation. What this would do is incentivize returning pharmaceutical production to the United States, allowing our colleges and universities to access funds from a $100 million grant pool to partner up with pharmaceutical companies so that we never find ourselves in the position of not being able to get the active pharmaceutical ingredients—they are called APIs—those ingredients that are necessary to make vaccines and antivirals for viruses like the COVID–19.

Right now, China is saying they may not let us have one of the products that we need. We commend our scientists and our companies and people like the Denison Lab at Vanderbilt University for the work they are doing to find that vaccine and to test that vaccine. We commend these labs for the work they are doing to find the right antivirals to help people fight this so that we are able to slow the growth, and we are able to cap the growth in this.

Now, we know also that as we go through this, telehealth is vitally important. This is something that I have discussed. As you know, I have discussed it with our conference, I have discussed it with the White House, and with the President, and the Vice President, and I am grateful to see the changes that we have in telehealth that is making it more available.

I was talking with a physician from another State—not Tennessee. I was talking with him yesterday, and he said: Well, our insurance company, which kind of is the only big insurance provider in this State, had decided they would allow telehealth through the end of the month. It is vitally important that we move these medically complex patients and the elderly—especially elderly who have comorbidities and have complex medical situations—to telehealth. It is important that CMS provide specificity and clarity on how this is going to be paid for these Medicaid and Medicare enrollees.

We commend CMS for moving forward through the 1135 waiver system—that section of the code with Medicaid—for making some adjustments, but it is imperative that for these private insurance companies, that we allow more specificity so we can utilize them.

We have a situation. We know that this virus came out of Wuhan, China. We know they knew about it in December. We know that the rest of the world found out about it about 6 weeks later. We know it has caused a global pandemic. We know every life is precious, and we grieve the loss of those lives, the inconvenience, and also the loss of the ability of so many people to have their businesses and be able to run their businesses, and families who are not able to experience what they had planned for this year.

So we know that we are going to be working ahead. We are going to stay here until we get much of this addressed and answer some of the questions that our constituents have. We do know we have done some work, but there is a lot more work to do, and we fully realize we can rise to this occasion.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

PROGRAM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we continue to work on the next bill, which is generally referred to as phase 3. This will be needed to respond to the crisis, and the Senate is going to stay around until we finish the bill and send it over to the House.

I recommend Senators stay close. While we don't know exactly how long it will take to get this done, everyone knows that we need to do it as quickly as possible because the situation demands it. So we will keep Senators posted. I hope they don't go too far away.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Roberts, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 5:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOYER) has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 6201. An act making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–4333. A communication from the Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Adjustments of Civil Monetary Penalty Amounts for 2020'' (RIN2501–AD90) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 17, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4334. A communication from the Assistant Director for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Rule to Remove From the Code of Federal Regulations the Terrorism Sanctions Regulations'' (31 CFR Part 595) received in the Office of the

President of the Senate on March 17, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4335. A communication from the Chief of the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the management of the Greater Sage-Grouse habitat on Federal lands; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4336. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''User Fee for Offers in Compromise'' ((RIN1545–BN38) (TD 9894)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 17, 2020; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4337. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''The Department of Justice Freedom of Information Act 2019 Litigation and Compliance Report,'' and the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for all federal agencies' Freedom of Information Act reports; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4338. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the implementation of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission for the period from October 1, 2018, through March 31, 2019; to the Committees on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; Select Committee on Intelligence; and the Judiciary.

EC–4339. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the implementation of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission for the period from April 1, 2019, through September 30, 2019; to the Committees on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; Select Committee on Intelligence; and the Judiciary.

EC–4340. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the implementation of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission for the period from April 1, 2018, through September 30, 2018; to the Committees on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; Select Committee on Intelligence; and the Judiciary.

EC–4341. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Structure and Practices of the Video Relay Service Program; Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, Order on Reconsideration and Order Suspending Compliance Deadline'' (CG Docket Nos. 10–51 and 03–123) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4342. A communication from the Chairman of the Office of Proceedings, Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Exclusion of Demurrage Regulation from Certain Class Exemptions'' (Docket No. EP 760) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4343. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Annual Report on Disability-Related Air Travel Complaints Received During Calendar Year 2018''; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4344. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Section 102 of the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act of 2018''; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4345. A communication from the Deputy Chief Counsel for Regulations and Security Standards, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Security Training for Surface Transportation Employees'' (RIN1652–AA55) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–191. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Maine respectfully urging and requesting the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration take the lives of the men and women of the Maine lobster industry into account in the agency's decision making and understand that the agency's proposed changes to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan will not save one right whale in Maine waters but will put many human lives in danger; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SENATE PAPER 762

We, your Memorialists, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Maine now assembled in the Second Regular Session, most respectfully present and petition the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as follows:

Whereas, the men and women who work in the Maine lobster industry are constantly at risk of injury and loss of life; and

Whereas, the safety of these workers must be the primary concern of all government agencies that regulate the ocean; and

Whereas, the Maine lobster industry has made many changes to help protect the right whale; and

Whereas, no right whales have been killed by Maine lobster gear and deaths in 2019 were predominantly by ship strikes in Canadian waters or in one instance due to Canadian fishing gear entanglements; and

Whereas, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has stated that right whales likely are not traveling in the waters in which Maine lobster fishing occurs; and

Whereas, the proposal to modify the existing Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will not save any right whales in Maine waters but will put the lives of workers in the Maine lobster industry at great risk; and

Whereas, the lobster industry is one of Maine's core traditional natural resource industries and has employed generations of Maine's citizens; and

Whereas, the lobster industry contributes $1.5 billion to Maine's economy and entire communities depend upon the work that the lobster industry provides; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That We, your Memorialists, respectfully urge and request that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration take the lives of the men and women of the Maine lobster industry into account in the agency's decision making and understand that the agency's proposed changes to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan will not save one right whale in Maine waters but will put many human lives in danger: and be it further

Resolved, That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United States, to the President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, to Dr. Neil Jacobs, acting Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, and to each Member of the Maine Congressional Delegation.

POM–192. A petition from a citizen of the State of Texas relative to H.R. 5383 the ''New Way Forward Act''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. COONS, Mr. KING, and Mr. KAINE):

S. 3515. A bill to establish the Innovation and Startups Equity Investment Program in the Department of the Treasury, through which the Secretary of the Treasury shall allocate money to certain States to assist high-potential scalable startups access venture capital to commercialize innovations, create jobs, and accelerate economic growth, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. HAWLEY:

S. 3516. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide emergency family relief in response to the outbreak of the NCOV–19; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 3517. A bill to increase the ability of nursing facilities to access to telehealth services and obtain technologies to allow virtual visits during the public health emergency relating to an outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID–19), and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 3518. A bill to provide grants to small business concerns, private nonprofit organizations, and small agricultural cooperatives affected by COVID–19, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. KING, Ms. HIRONO, and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 3519. A bill to authorize the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to subsidize payments on loans guaranteed under the 7(a) and 504 loan programs or made using funds under the microloan program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 3520. A bill to waive, for 1 year, the cost sharing requirements of the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. COTTON:
S. 3521. A bill to provide assistance through tax rebates, certain Federal assistance programs, and business loans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COTTON:
S. 3522. A bill to extend and expand the temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) program and related programs to respond to the COVID–19 public health emergency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COTTON:
S. 3523. A bill to provide for the temporary funding of the expansion of eligibility of unemployment compensation to respond to the COVID–19 public health emergency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COTTON:
S. 3524. A bill to modify terms related to the economic injury disaster loan program of the Small Business Administration for applicants affected by COVID–19, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:
S. 3525. A bill to allow a tax credit for certain coronavirus-related charitable contributions for taxable year 2020; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. REED:
S. 3526. A bill to restrict the authority of the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase or guarantee assets in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID–19) outbreak; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. DAINES):
S. 3527. A bill to waive required minimum distribution rules for retirement plans in 2020; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY:
S. 3528. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to suspend the inclusion in gross income of Social Security benefits; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. SMITH, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. JONES, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. UDALL, Ms. WARREN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Ms. CANTWELL):
S. 3529. A bill to require States to establish contingency plans for the conduct of elections for Federal office in response to national disasters and emergencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. MARKEY:
S. 3530. A bill to amend the National Security Act of 1947 to require the President to designate an employee of the National Security Council to be responsible for pandemic prevention and response, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO):
S. 3531. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to ensure small businesses affected by the onset of communicable diseases are eligible for disaster relief; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):
S. 3532. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to provide coverage of prescription digital therapeutics for the treatment of mental health and substance use disorders under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRAMER:
S. 3533. A bill authorize and establish minimum standards for electronic and remote notarizations that occur in or affect interstate commerce, to require any Federal court located in a State to recognize notarizations performed by a notary public commissioned by another State when the notarization occurs in or affects interstate commerce, and to require any State to recognize notarizations performed by a notary public commissioned by another State when the notarization occurs in or affects interstate commerce or when the notarization was performed under or relates to a public act, record, or judicial proceeding of the State in which the notary public was commissioned; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina):
S. Res. 546. A resolution recognizing the week of March 15 through March 21, 2020, as ''National Poison Prevention Week'' and encouraging communities across the United States to raise awareness of the dangers of poisoning and promote poisoning prevention; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. JONES, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BENNET, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CARPER, and Ms. SMITH):
S. Res. 547. A resolution encouraging the President to use authorities provided by the Defense Production Act of 1950 to scale up the national response to the coronavirus crisis; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 3056

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3056, a bill to designate as wilderness certain Federal portions of the red rock canyons of the Colorado Plateau and the Great Basin Deserts in the State of Utah for the benefit of present and future generations of people in the United States.

S. 3190

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3190, a bill to authorize dedicated domestic terrorism offices within the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to analyze and monitor domestic terrorist activity and require the Federal Government to take steps to prevent domestic terrorism.

S. 3478

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3478, a bill to require a report to assess, evaluate, and address the dependence of the United States on critical drugs and devices sourced or manufactured outside of the United States.

S. 3502

At the request of Mr. CRAMER, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3502, a bill to delay the implementation date of the current expected credit losses methodology for estimating allowances for credit losses, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 546—RECOGNIZING THE WEEK OF MARCH 15 THROUGH MARCH 21, 2020, AS ''NATIONAL POISON PREVENTION WEEK'' AND ENCOURAGING COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE DANGERS OF POISONING AND PROMOTE POISONING PREVENTION

Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 546

Whereas the designation of National Poison Prevention Week was first authorized by Congress and President Kennedy in 1961 in Public Law 87–319 (75 Stat. 681);

Whereas National Poison Prevention Week occurs during the third full week of March each year;

Whereas the American Association of Poison Control Centers (referred to in this preamble as the ''AAPCC'') works with the 55 poison control centers in the United States—

(1) to track more than 1,000 commonly used household and workplace products; and

(2) to track poisonings and the sources of those poisonings;

Whereas 2,000,000 people call the poison help line annually to reach a poison control center;

Whereas, as reported to the AAPCC, more than 90 percent of poison exposures reported to local poison control centers occur in the home;

Whereas local poison control centers save the people of the United States $1,800,000,000 in medical costs per year;

Whereas the AAPCC and poison control centers partner with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, and State and local health departments to monitor occurrences of environmental, biological, and emerging threats in communities across the United States, including food poisoning, botulism, and vaping-associated lung injury;

Whereas, in the United States—

(1) more than 300 children 19 years of age and younger are treated in emergency departments for poisoning every day; and

(2) 980 children 19 years of age and younger die as a result of being poisoned each year;

Whereas children younger than 6 years of age constitute nearly ½ of all poison exposures each year;

Whereas, from 2010 to 2018, data from poison control centers revealed a significant increase of 9.9 percent in the number of intentional suicide patients who were adolescents 10 to 19 years of age, and that increase disproportionately occurred among females;

Whereas, in 2018—

(1) more than 114,000 children 19 years of age and younger were treated in an emergency room due to unintended pediatric poisoning; and

(2) more than 90 percent of those incidents occurred in the home, most often with blood pressure medications, acetaminophen, laundry packets, bleach, or sedatives or anti-anxiety medication;

Whereas 70,237 cases of death due to drug overdose were reported in the United States in 2017, and the majority of those cases, approximately 68 percent, involved an opioid;

Whereas the most common medications that adults call the poison help line about are analgesics, antipsychotics, antidepressants, and cardiovascular medications;

Whereas pain medications—

(1) lead the list of the most common substances implicated in adult poison exposures; and

(2) are the single most frequent cause of pediatric fatalities reported to the AAPCC;

Whereas poison control centers issue guidance and provide support to individuals, including individuals who experience medication and dosing errors;

Whereas more than 60 percent of therapeutic errors involve individuals 20 years of age or older, with more than ½ of those involving patients older than 50 years of age, and common errors include drug interactions, incorrect dosing route, incorrect timing of doses, and double doses;

Whereas normal, curious children younger than 6 years of age—

(1) are in stages of growth and development in which they are constantly exploring and investigating the world around them; and

(2) are often unable to read or recognize warning labels;

Whereas the AAPCC—

(1) engages in community outreach by educating the public on poison safety and poisoning prevention; and

(2) provides educational resources, materials, and guidelines to educate the public on poisoning prevention;

Whereas individuals can reach a poison control center from anywhere in the United States by calling the poison help line at 1-800-222-1222;

Whereas, despite regulations of the Consumer Product Safety Commission requiring that a child-resistant package be designed or constructed to be significantly difficult for children under 5 years of age to open, or obtain a harmful amount of the contents, within a reasonable time, children can still get into child-resistant packages; and

Whereas, each year during National Poison Prevention Week, the Federal Government assesses the progress made by the Federal Government in saving lives and reaffirms the national commitment of the Federal Government to preventing injuries and deaths from poisoning: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the week of March 15 through March 21, 2020, as ''National Poison Prevention Week'';

(2) expresses gratitude for the people who operate or support poison control centers in their local communities;

(3) supports efforts and resources to provide poison prevention guidance or emergency assistance in response to poisonings; and

(4) encourages—

(A) the people of the United States to educate their communities and families about poison safety and poisoning prevention; and

(B) health care providers to practice and promote poison safety and poisoning prevention.

SENATE RESOLUTION 547—ENCOURAGING THE PRESIDENT TO USE AUTHORITIES PROVIDED BY THE DEFENSE PRODUCTION ACT OF 1950 TO SCALE UP THE NATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. JONES, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BENNET, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CARPER, and Ms. SMITH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

S. RES. 547

Whereas more than 3,800 people in the United States have already tested positive for the novel coronavirus across 49 States, the District of Columbia, and 3 territories, with experts believing the number is already much higher;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have projected that between 160,000,000 and 214,000,000 people could be infected by the novel coronavirus in the United States over the course of the pandemic;

Whereas the United States health care sector is facing severe shortages of critical supplies for coronavirus testing and treatment, including personal protective equipment for staff and infected patients, N95 respirators, sanitizing materials, ventilators, and test kit supplies;

Whereas the Strategic National Stockpile contains only a fraction of the supplies that the Department of Health and Human Services estimates will be necessary to respond to the coronavirus crisis, with the stockpile currently holding less than 0.3 percent of the amount of respirators estimated to be necessary;

Whereas the President has the existing authority under the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4501 et seq.) to take immediate action to mobilize United States industry for emergency preparedness activities conducted pursuant to title VI of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5195 et seq.), which has been previously used to respond to public health hazards; and

Whereas the President issued a national emergency declaration relating to the novel coronavirus under section 501(b) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5191(b)) on March 13, 2020: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) calls on the President to use existing authorities under the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4501 et seq.) to massively and quickly ramp up production in the United States of medical supplies, including personal protective equipment, needed to respond to the ongoing public health emergency driven by the spread of the novel coronavirus;

(2) urges the President to prioritize the use of those authorities to produce and secure additional personal protective equipment, test kit supplies, respirators, ventilators, and sanitizing materials for use within the health care sector in the United States;

(3) supports the use of authorities under title I of the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4511 et seq.) to allocate and control the distribution of medical materials needed for testing and treating the novel coronavirus, including by directing suppliers to prioritize and accept government contracts to restock the Strategic National Stockpile where necessary;

(4) supports the use of authorities under title III of the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4531 et seq.) to provide financial incentives to manufacturers and suppliers of critical medical equipment, including loans, loan guarantees, direct purchases, and purchase commitments; and

(5) supports the use of authorities under title VII of the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4551 et seq.) to establish voluntary agreements between the Federal Government and private industry that would allow for the temporary coordination of production of necessary and scarce medical supplies.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1556. Mr. PAUL proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 6201, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

SA 1557. Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6201, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1558. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. LEE, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mrs. LOEFFLER, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. SASSE, and Mr. BARRASSO) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 6201, supra.

SA 1559. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Ms. HARRIS) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 6201, supra.

SA 1560. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6201, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1556. Mr. PAUL proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 6201, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUIREMENT FOR CHILD TAX CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 24(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

''(1) SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUIRED.—No credit shall be allowed under this section to a taxpayer with respect to any qualifying child unless the taxpayer includes the social security number of such child on the return of tax for the taxable year. For purposes of the preceding sentence, the term 'social security number' means a social security number issued to an individual by the Social Security Administration, but only if the social security number is issued—

''(A) to a citizen of the United States or pursuant to subclause (I) (or that portion of subclause (III) that relates to subclause (I)) of section 205(c)(2)(B)(i) of the Social Security Act, and

''(B) before the due date for such return.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Subsection (h) of section 24 of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking ''paragraph (7)'' in paragraph (4)(C) and inserting ''subsection (e)(1)'',

(B) by striking paragraph (7), and

(C) by striking ''(2) through (7)'' in paragraph (1) and inserting ''(2) through (6)''.

(2) Section 6213(g)(2)(I) of such Code is amended by striking ''TIN'' and inserting ''social security number''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. _____. TRANSFER AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the President may transfer, as necessary and without limitation, amounts from any account in the Treasury to any other account in the Treasury being used for the purpose of combating, addressing, or ameliorating the coronavirus pandemic.

(b) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—The President shall submit to Congress, on each of the following dates, a notification detailing each transfer made under subsection (a) during the time period preceding the notification:

(1) July 1, 2020.

(2) October 1, 2020.

(3) January 1, 2021.

(c) EXPIRATION.—The transfer authority in subsection (a) shall expire on December 31, 2020.

SEC. _____. TERMINATION OF UNITED STATES MILITARY OPERATIONS AND RECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES IN AFGHANISTAN.

(a) TERMINATION.—Military operations of the United States Armed Forces and reconstruction activities of the United States Government in Afghanistan are hereby terminated.

(b) DEADLINE FOR COMPLETE CESSATION.—Not later than December 31, 2020—

(1) all United States Armed Forces shall be removed from Afghanistan; and

(2) all reconstruction activities of the United States Government in Afghanistan shall be wound up.

(c) PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.—Appropriated funds may not be obligated or expended in connection with military operations and reconstruction activities described in subsection (a) after December 31, 2020.

SA 1557. Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6201, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division A, insert the following:

TITLE _____

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

SPR PETROLEUM ACCOUNT

For an additional amount for the SPR Petroleum Account established under section 167(a) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6247(a)), $3,000,000,000, to be derived by transfer from the amounts provided by section 129(a) of the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2009 (Public Law 110–329; 122 Stat. 3578), to remain available until September 30, 2020.

SA 1558. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. LEE, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mrs. LOEFFLER, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. SASSE, and Mr. BARRASSO) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 6201, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike divisions C, E, and G.

At the end of division D, add the following:

SEC. ___. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) it is the intention of Congress and the administration to provide immediate financial support to workers who will be idled and lose pay and benefits because of COVID-19;

(2) Federally mandated sick pay and paid family leave will prompt some employers who cannot afford this mandate to preemptively terminate the employment of workers they no longer have work for due to circumstances surrounding COVID-19;

(3) even without that negative incentive, the COVID-19 will cause many Americans to lose their jobs, and not be eligible for Federally mandated sick pay or family and medical leave, so the only income support will be unemployment insurance; and

(4) it would be more efficient to administer this Federal financial support for workers using only one, rather than two or more programs.

SEC. ___. TEMPORARY EMERGENCY FEDERAL CORONAVIRUS UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFIT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to receive the credit against the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (26 U.S.C. 23), States shall provide temporary emergency Federal coronavirus unemployment insurance benefits to any individual who has worked for pay at any time in the last 30 days and who for any calendar day is not able to engage in employment due to any of the following reasons:

(1) The individual is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19.

(2) The individual has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.

(3) The individual is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking medical diagnosis;

(4) The individual is caring for an individual who is subject to an order as described in paragraph (1) or has been advised as described in paragraph (2);

(5) The individual is caring for a son or daughter under the age of 18 years of such individual if the school or place of care of the son or daughter has been closed, or the child care provider of such son of daughter is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions.

(6) The individual is subject to a temporary lay-off under section 604.5(a)(3) of title 20, Code of Federal Regulations, due to COVID-19.

(b) WAITING PERIOD.—States shall not require any waiting period in order to receive benefits for those individuals described in subsection (a).

(c) BENEFITS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—States shall pay benefits to those individuals described in subsection (a) on a weekly basis for each calendar day an individual is not able to engage in employment for up to 14 weeks.

(2) CALCULATION.—

(A) AMOUNT.—The weekly benefit shall be the lesser of—

(i) two-thirds of the individual's average weekly earnings; or

(ii) $1,000.

(B) DETERMINATIONS.—The amount of an individual's average weekly earnings shall be determined by the State.

(d) RETROACTIVE APPLICATION.—States shall make temporary emergency Federal coronavirus unemployment insurance benefits under this section retroactively available to March 1, 2020.

(e) WORK REQUIREMENTS.—Individuals receiving temporary emergency Federal coronavirus unemployment insurance benefits under this section shall not be required to search for work.

(f) FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENTS.—The Federal government shall—

(1) reimburse States for the full cost of complying with the requirements under this section that are above and beyond the benefits currently provided under each State's current unemployment insurance law for benefits paid under this program; and

(2) reimburse any employer who employs fewer than 500 employees and who voluntarily provides paid leave to an employee for the reasons described in subsection (a) an amount equal to two-thirds of the actual payment made up to $1,000 per week and not to exceed $10,000 per employee.

(g) NATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE.—For purposes of calculating the National unemployment rate, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor shall not include workers obtaining temporary emergency Federal coronavirus unemployment insurance benefits.

(h) REGULATORY AUTHORITIES.—

(1) LABOR.—The Secretary of Labor (or the Secretary's delegate) shall prescribe such regulations or other guidance as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

(2) TREASURY.—The Secretary of Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) shall prescribe such regulations or other guidance as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of this section.

(i) SUNSET.—The temporary emergency Federal coronavirus unemployment insurance benefit program under this section shall expire on the earlier of the date of the termination of the national emergency declared by the President under the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) or December 31, 2020.

SA 1559. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Ms. HARRIS) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 6201, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

DIVISION ____—PAID SICK TIME AND PAID LEAVE

SECTION __001. SHORT TITLE.

This division may be cited as the ''Providing Americans Insured Days of Leave Act of 2020''.

TITLE I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. __101. ADJUSTMENT TO THE FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, divisions, C, E, and G shall have no force or effect.

TITLE II—IMMEDIATE REIMBURSEMENT OF EMPLOYERS FOR PAID SICK DAYS AND PAID LEAVE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

SEC. __201. IMMEDIATE REIMBURSEMENT OF EMPLOYERS FOR PAID SICK DAYS AND PAID LEAVE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this title, the terms ''covered individual'', ''employer'', ''paid sick time'', and ''Secretary'' have the meanings given the terms in section __301.

(b) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—

(1) REIMBURSEMENT.—An employer of a covered individual who uses paid sick time or emergency paid leave under title III during 2020 or 2021 shall be reimbursed by the Secretary of the Treasury out of the Treasury of the United States for the wages paid to the covered individual for the period during which the covered individual used the paid sick time or emergency paid leave.

(2) PROCESS.—

(A) INFORMATION.—To be eligible to receive such reimbursement, the employer shall submit to the Secretary of Labor an affidavit

that attests that the employer provided such paid sick time or emergency paid leave, and related records showing the period of and wages associated with the paid sick time or emergency paid leave.

(B) DETERMINATION.—The Secretary shall review the information in the affidavit and records and come to a determination regarding the validity of such information within 5 business days after receipt. If the Secretary does not make a determination within the 5-business-day period, on the sixth business day after receipt of such information the Secretary shall be deemed to have determined the information to be valid.

(C) REIMBURSEMENT.—Upon the Secretary's determination that the information is valid and that the employer provided an amount of such paid sick time or emergency paid leave to a covered individual, the Secretary shall transmit the determination, affidavit, and records to the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of the Treasury shall provide timely reimbursement out of the Treasury of the United States. The Secretary of the Treasury shall provide that reimbursement not later than 2 business days after receipt of the determination from the Secretary of Labor.

(c) FRAUD.—The Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of the Treasury shall both have authority to investigate fraud under this section and to seek recovery of fraudulently obtained funds and related penalties in any court of competent jurisdiction.

TITLE III—PAID SICK DAYS AND PAID LEAVE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

SEC. __301. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) CHILD.—The term ''child'' means a biological, foster, or adopted child, a stepchild, a child of a domestic partner, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis.

(2) COVERED INDIVIDUAL.—The term ''covered individual'' means an individual who is—

(A) an employee; or

(B) an individual performing any services or labor for remuneration for an employer, regardless of whether the individual is classified as an independent contractor by the employer.

(3) DOMESTIC PARTNER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''domestic partner'', with respect to an individual, means another individual with whom the individual is in a committed relationship.

(B) COMMITTED RELATIONSHIP DEFINED.—The term ''committed relationship'' means a relationship between 2 individuals, each at least 18 years of age, in which each individual is the other individual's sole domestic partner and both individuals share responsibility for a significant measure of each other's common welfare. The term includes any such relationship between 2 individuals, including individuals of the same sex, that is granted legal recognition by a State or political subdivision of a State as a marriage or analogous relationship, including a civil union or domestic partnership.

(4) DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.—The term ''domestic violence'' has the meaning given the term in section 40002(a) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)), except that the reference in such section to the term ''jurisdiction receiving grant monies'' shall be deemed to mean the jurisdiction in which the victim lives or the jurisdiction in which the employer involved is located. Such term also includes dating violence, as that term is defined in such section.

(5) EMPLOYEE.—The term ''employee'' means an individual who is—

(A)(i) an employee, as defined in section 3(e) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(e)), who is not covered under subparagraph (E), except that a reference in such section to an employer shall be considered to be a reference to an employer described in clauses (i)(I) and (ii) of paragraph (6)(A); or

(ii) an employee of the Government Accountability Office;

(B) a State employee described in section 304(a) of the Government Employee Rights Act of 1991 (42 U.S.C. 2000e–16c(a));

(C) a covered employee, as defined in section 101 of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1301), other than an applicant for employment;

(D) a covered employee, as defined in section 411(c) of title 3, United States Code; or

(E) a Federal officer or employee covered under subchapter V of chapter 63 of title 5, United States Code, or any other individual occupying a position in the civil service (as that term is defined in section 2102(1) of title 5, United States Code).

(6) EMPLOYER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''employer'' means a person who is—

(i)(I) a covered employer, as defined in subparagraph (B), who is not covered under subclause (V);

(II) an entity employing a State employee described in section 304(a) of the Government Employee Rights Act of 1991;

(III) an employing office, as defined in section 101 of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995;

(IV) an employing office, as defined in section 411(c) of title 3, United States Code; or

(V) an employing agency covered under subchapter V of chapter 63 of title 5, United States Code; and

(ii) engaged in commerce (including government), or an industry or activity affecting commerce (including government), as defined in subparagraph (B)(iii).

(B) COVERED EMPLOYER.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—In subparagraph (A)(i)(I), the term ''covered employer''—

(I) means any person engaged in commerce or in any industry or activity affecting commerce who employs 1 or more employees;

(II) includes—

(aa) any person who acts directly or indirectly in the interest of (within the meaning of section 3(d) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(d)) an employer in relation to any of the employees of such employer; and

(bb) any successor in interest of an employer;

(III) includes any ''public agency'', as defined in section 3(x) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(x)); and

(IV) includes the Government Accountability Office.

(ii) PUBLIC AGENCY.—For purposes of subclause (III) or (IV) of clause (i), a public agency shall be considered to be a person engaged in commerce or in an industry or activity affecting commerce.

(iii) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subparagraph:

(I) COMMERCE.—The terms ''commerce'' and ''industry or activity affecting commerce'' mean any activity, business, or industry in commerce or in which a labor dispute would hinder or obstruct commerce or the free flow of commerce, and include ''commerce'' and any ''industry affecting commerce'', as defined in paragraphs (1) and (3) of section 501 of the Labor Management Relations Act, 1947 (29 U.S.C. 142 (1) and (3)).

(II) EMPLOYEE.—The term ''employee'' has the same meaning given such term in section 3(e) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(e)).

(III) PERSON.—The term ''person'' has the same meaning given such term in section 3(a) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(a)).

(C) PREDECESSORS.—Any reference in this paragraph to an employer shall include a reference to any predecessor of such employer.

(7) EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS.—The term ''employment benefits'' means all benefits provided or made available to covered individuals by an employer, including group life insurance, health insurance, disability insurance, sick leave, annual leave, educational benefits, and pensions, regardless of whether such benefits are provided by a practice or written policy of an employer or through an ''employee benefit plan'', as defined in section 3(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1002(3)).

(8) FLSA TERMS.—The terms ''employ'' and ''State'' have the meanings given the terms in section 3 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203).

(9) HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.—The term ''health care provider'' means a provider who—

(A)(i) is a doctor of medicine or osteopathy who is authorized to practice medicine or surgery (as appropriate) by the State in which the doctor practices; or

(ii) is any other person determined by the Secretary to be capable of providing health care services; and

(B) is not employed by an employer for whom the provider issues certification under this title.

(10) PAID SICK TIME.—The term ''paid sick time'' means an increment of compensated leave that—

(A) can be—

(i) earned by a covered individual for use during an absence from employment or work for a reason described in any paragraph of section __302(b); or

(ii) provided by an employer during a public health emergency for use during an absence from employment or work for a reason described in any paragraph of section __302(b); and

(B) is compensated at a rate that is not less than the greatest of—

(i) the covered individual's regular rate of pay;

(ii) the minimum wage rate provided for in section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)); or

(iii) the minimum wage rate provided for in the applicable State or local law for the State or locality in which the covered individual is employed or works.

(11) PARENT.—The term ''parent'' means a biological, foster, or adoptive parent of a covered individual, a stepparent of a covered individual, a parent-in-law of a covered individual, a parent of a domestic partner of a covered individual, or a legal guardian or other person who stood in loco parentis to a covered individual when the covered individual was a child.

(12) PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.—The term ''public health emergency'' means—

(A) a public health emergency—

(i) declared by the Secretary of Health and Human Services for a jurisdiction, or by a State or local public health official with authority to declare such an emergency for the State or jurisdiction within the State; and

(ii) due to a public health condition that is—

(I) emergent and acute;

(II) not a longstanding, chronic public health condition; and

(B) an emergency with respect to coronavirus, as defined in section 506 of the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020 (Public Law 116–123), declared by a Federal, State, or local public official.

(13) QUALIFIED CAREGIVING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''qualified caregiving'' means any activity engaged in by an individual, other than regular employment, for a reason for which an eligible employee would be entitled to leave under subparagraphs (A) through (E) of paragraph (1) of section 102(a) of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. 2612(a)).

(B) DETERMINATION OF WHETHER AN ACTIVITY CONSTITUTES QUALIFIED CAREGIVING.—For purposes of determining whether an activity engaged in by an individual constitutes qualified caregiving under subparagraph (A)—

(i) the term ''spouse'' (as used in section 102(a) of the Family and Medical Leave Act (29 U.S.C. 2612(a))) includes the individual's domestic partner; and

(ii) the term ''son or daughter'' (as used in such section) includes a son or daughter (as defined in section 101 of such Act (29 U.S.C. 2611) of the individual's domestic partner.

(14) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Labor.

(15) SEXUAL ASSAULT.—The term ''sexual assault'' has the meaning given the term in section 40002(a) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)).

(16) SPOUSE.—The term ''spouse'', with respect to a covered individual, has the meaning given such term by the marriage laws of the State in which the marriage was celebrated.

(17) STALKING.—The term ''stalking'' has the meaning given the term in section 40002(a) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)).

(18) VICTIM SERVICES ORGANIZATION.—The term ''victim services organization'' means a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that provides assistance to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking or advocates for such victims, including a rape crisis center, an organization carrying out a domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking prevention or treatment program, an organization operating a shelter or providing counseling services, or a legal services organization or other organization providing assistance through the legal process.

(19) WORK.—The term ''work'' means to be employed or to be engaged in providing labor or services for an employer.

SEC. _302. PAID SICK TIME AND EMERGENCY PAID LEAVE.

(a) EARNING OF PAID SICK TIME.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) EARNING.—Subject to subsection (c) and paragraph (2), an employer shall provide each covered individual employed by or working for the employer not less than 1 hour of earned paid sick time for every 30 hours worked, to be used as described in subsection (b).

(B) LIMIT.—An employer shall not be required to permit a covered individual to earn, under this subsection, more than 56 hours of paid sick time in a year, unless the employer chooses to set a higher limit.

(2) EXEMPT EMPLOYEES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), for purposes of this subsection, an employee who is exempt from overtime requirements under section 13(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 213(a)(1)) shall be assumed to work 40 hours in each workweek.

(B) SHORTER NORMAL WORKWEEK.—If the normal workweek of such an employee is less than 40 hours, the employee shall earn paid sick time under this subsection based upon that normal workweek.

(3) DATES FOR BEGINNING TO EARN PAID SICK TIME AND USE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Covered individuals shall begin to earn paid sick time under this subsection at the commencement of their employment or work. A covered individual shall be entitled to use the earned paid sick time beginning on the 60th calendar day following commencement of the covered individual's employment or work. After that 60th calendar day, the covered individual may use the paid sick time as the time is earned. An employer may, at the discretion of the employer, loan paid sick time to a covered individual for use by such covered individual in advance of the covered individual earning such sick time as provided in this subsection and may permit use before the 60th day of employment or work.

(B) PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply with respect to additional paid sick time provided under subsection (c). In the event of a public health emergency, a covered individual may immediately use the accrued or additional paid sick time described in subsection (c), regardless of how long the covered individual has been employed by or working for an employer.

(4) CARRYOVER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), paid sick time earned under this subsection shall carry over from 1 year to the next.

(B) CONSTRUCTION.—This subsection shall not be construed to require an employer to permit a covered individual to earn more than 56 hours of earned paid sick time at a given time.

(5) EMPLOYERS WITH EXISTING POLICIES.—Any employer with a paid leave policy who makes available an amount of paid leave that is sufficient to meet the requirements of this subsection and that may be used for the same purposes and under the same conditions as the purposes and conditions outlined in subsection (b) shall not be required to permit a covered individual to earn more paid sick time under this subsection.

(6) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as requiring financial or other reimbursement to a covered individual from an employer upon the covered individual's termination, resignation, retirement, or other separation from employment or work for paid sick time that has not been used.

(7) REINSTATEMENT.—If a covered individual is separated from employment or work with an employer and is rehired or reengaged for work, within 12 months after that separation, by the same employer, the employer shall reinstate the covered individual's previously earned paid sick time under this subsection. The covered individual shall be entitled to use the earned paid sick time and earn more paid sick time at the recommencement of employment or work with the employer.

(8) PROHIBITION.—An employer may not require, as a condition of providing paid sick time under this title, that the covered individual involved search for or find a replacement covered individual to cover the hours during which the covered individual is using paid sick time.

(9) SCHEDULING.—A covered individual shall make a reasonable effort to schedule a period of accrued paid sick time under this subsection in a manner that does not unduly disrupt the operations of the employer.

(b) USES.—Paid sick time or emergency paid leave under this section may be used by a covered individual for any of the following:

(1) An absence resulting from a physical or mental illness, injury, or medical condition of the covered individual.

(2) An absence resulting from obtaining professional medical diagnosis or care, or preventive medical care, for the covered individual.

(3) An absence resulting from the closure of a covered individual's place of employment or work by order of a Federal or State public official with jurisdiction, or at the employer's discretion, due to a public health emergency.

(4) An absence because a Federal or State public official with jurisdiction or a health care provider has determined, or the covered individual has independently determined, that the covered individual's presence in the community may jeopardize the health of others because of the covered individual's exposure to a communicable disease during a public health emergency or the exhibition of symptoms of a communicable disease during a public health emergency, regardless of whether the covered individual has actually contracted the communicable disease.

(5) An absence for the purpose of caring for a child, a parent, a spouse, a domestic partner, or any other individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the covered individual is the equivalent of a family relationship—

(A) who has any of the conditions or needs for diagnosis or care described in paragraph (4);

(B) who is a child, if the child's school or place of care has been closed by order of a Federal or State public official with jurisdiction or at the discretion of the school or place of care due to a public health emergency, including if a school or entity operating the place of care is physically closed but is providing education or care to the child remotely; or

(C) because a Federal or State public official with jurisdiction or a health care provider has determined that the presence in the community of the person receiving care may jeopardize the health of others because of the person's exposure to a communicable disease during a public health emergency, regardless of whether the person has actually contracted the communicable disease.

(6) An absence for the purpose of caring for a child, a parent, a spouse, a domestic partner, or any other individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the covered individual is the equivalent of a family relationship—

(A) who has any of the conditions or needs for diagnosis or care described in paragraph (1) or (2);

(B) who is a child, if the covered individual is required to attend a school meeting or a meeting at a place where the child is receiving care necessitated by the child's health condition or disability; or

(C) who is otherwise in need of care.

(7) An absence resulting from domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, if the time is to—

(A) seek medical attention for the covered individual or the covered individual's child, parent, spouse, domestic partner, or an individual related to the covered individual as described in paragraph (6), to recover from physical or psychological injury or disability caused by domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking;

(B) obtain or assist a related person described in paragraph (6) in obtaining services from a victim services organization;

(C) obtain or assist a related person described in paragraph (6) in obtaining psychological or other counseling;

(D) seek relocation; or

(E) take legal action, including preparing for or participating in any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or resulting from domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

(c) ADDITIONAL PAID SICK TIME FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.—

(1) ADDITIONAL PAID SICK TIME.—On the date of a declaration of a public health emergency, an employer in the jurisdiction involved shall provide each covered individual

of the employer in that jurisdiction with additional paid sick time, in addition to any amount of paid sick time accrued by the covered individual under subsection (a) (including paid leave referred to in subsection (a)(5)).

(2) AMOUNT OF PAID SICK TIME.—In receiving additional paid sick time under paragraph (1), the covered individual shall receive—

(A) for a full-time salaried covered individual, a specified amount of paid sick time that is sufficient to provide the covered individual with 14 continuous days away from work without a reduction in pay; and

(B) subject to paragraph (3), for a part-time, hourly, or piece-rate covered individual, a specified amount of paid sick time equal to the number of hours that the covered individual was scheduled to work or, if not so scheduled, regularly works in a 14-day period.

(3) VARYING SCHEDULE HOURS CALCULATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a part-time, hourly, or piece-rate covered individual described in paragraph (2)(B) whose schedule varies from week to week to such an extent that an employer is unable to determine with certainty the number of hours the covered individual regularly works, the employer shall use the rules specified in subparagraph (B) to calculate the amount of additional paid sick time that the covered individual shall receive under paragraph (2)(B).

(B) SPECIAL CALCULATION RULES.—The employer shall calculate that amount as—

(i) subject to clause (ii), a number equal to the average number of hours that the covered individual was scheduled to work per 14-day period over the 6-month period ending on the date on which the covered individual takes such additional paid sick time, including hours for which the covered individual took leave of any type; or

(ii) if the covered individual did not work over such 6-month period, the reasonable expectation of the covered individual at the time of hiring or engagement of the average number of hours per 14-day period that the covered individual would regularly be scheduled to work.

(4) GUIDELINES.—Not later than 5 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor shall issue guidelines to assist employers in calculating the amount of additional paid sick time that a covered individual shall receive under this subsection.

(5) USE OF LEAVE.—The additional sick time and accrued sick time described in this subsection shall be available for immediate use by the covered individual for the purposes described in any paragraph of subsection (b) beginning on the date a public health emergency is declared, regardless of how long the covered individual has been employed by or working for an employer.

(6) PERIODS.—A covered individual may take the additional sick time on the schedule that meets the covered individual's needs, consistent with subsection (b), including taking the additional sick time intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule, and an employer may not require a covered individual to take the additional sick time in a single period or on any other schedule specified by the employer.

(d) EMERGENCY PAID LEAVE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—During a public health emergency, an employer in the jurisdiction involved shall provide each covered individual of the employer in that jurisdiction with emergency paid leave, in addition to any amount of paid sick time accrued by the covered individual under subsection (a) (including paid leave referred to in subsection (a)(5)) and in addition to additional paid sick time under subsection (c).

(2) AMOUNT OF PAID LEAVE.—In receiving emergency paid leave under paragraph (1), the covered individual shall receive 12 weeks of such paid leave.

(3) AMOUNT OF BENEFIT.—In receiving emergency paid leave under paragraph (1), the covered individual shall be compensated at a rate that is not less than the greatest of—

(A) two-thirds of the covered individual's regular rate of pay;

(B) the minimum wage rate provided for in section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)); or

(C) the minimum wage rate provided for in the applicable State or local law for the State or locality in which the covered individual is employed or working.

(4) USE OF LEAVE.—The emergency paid leave described in this subsection shall be available for immediate use by the covered individual for the purposes described in any paragraph of subsection (b), and for qualified caregiving, beginning on the date a public health emergency is declared, regardless of how long the covered individual has been employed by or working for an employer.

(5) PERIODS.—A covered individual may take the emergency paid leave on the schedule that meets the covered individual's needs, consistent with subsection (b) and the definition of qualified caregiving, including taking the emergency paid leave intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule, and an employer may not require a covered individual to take the emergency paid leave in a single period or on any other schedule specified by the employer.

(6) SEQUENCING.—During a public health emergency, a covered individual may first use the additional sick time for the purposes described in any paragraph of subsection (b). The covered individual may then use the emergency paid leave during a public health emergency. A covered individual may elect to use accrued sick time before additional sick time or emergency paid leave. An employer may not require a covered individual to use accrued sick time or any other paid leave provided by the employer to the covered individual, before using additional sick time or emergency paid leave.

(7) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as requiring financial or other reimbursement to a covered individual from an employer upon the covered individual's termination, resignation, retirement, or other separation from employment or work for emergency paid leave that has not been used.

(8) PROHIBITION.—An employer may not require, as a condition of providing emergency paid leave under this title, that the covered individual involved search for or find a replacement covered individual to cover the hours during which the covered individual is using emergency paid leave.

(e) PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Paid sick time and emergency paid leave shall be provided upon the oral or written request of a covered individual. Such request shall—

(A) include the expected duration of the period of such time or leave;

(B) in a case in which the need for such period of time is foreseeable at least 7 days in advance of such period, be provided at least 7 days in advance of such period; and

(C) otherwise, be provided as soon as practicable after the covered individual is aware of the need for such period.

(2) CERTIFICATION IN GENERAL.—

(A) PROVISION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraphs (C) and (D), an employer may require that a request for paid sick time under this section for a purpose described in paragraph (1), (2), or (6) of subsection (b) be supported by a certification issued by the health care provider of the covered individual or of an individual described in subsection (b)(6), as appropriate, if the period of such time covers more than 3 consecutive workdays.

(ii) TIMELINESS.—The covered individual shall provide a copy of such certification to the employer in a timely manner, not later than 30 days after the first day of the period of time. The employer shall not delay the commencement of the period of time on the basis that the employer has not yet received the certification.

(B) SUFFICIENT CERTIFICATION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—A certification provided under subparagraph (A) shall be sufficient if it states—

(I) the date on which the period of time will be needed;

(II) the probable duration of the period of time;

(III) the appropriate medical facts within the knowledge of the health care provider regarding the condition involved, subject to clause (ii); and

(IV)(aa) for purposes of paid sick time under subsection (b)(1), a statement that absence from work is medically necessary;

(bb) for purposes of such time under subsection (b)(2), the dates on which testing for a medical diagnosis or care is expected to be given and the duration of such testing or care; and

(cc) for purposes of such time under subsection (b)(6), in the case of time to care for someone who is not a child, a statement that care is needed for an individual described in such subsection, and an estimate of the amount of time that such care is needed for such individual.

(ii) LIMITATION.—In issuing a certification under subparagraph (A), a health care provider shall make reasonable efforts to limit the medical facts described in clause (i)(III) that are disclosed in the certification to the minimum necessary to establish a need for the covered individual to utilize paid sick time.

(C) PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES.—No certification or other documentation may be required under this title by an employer during any public health emergency.

(D) REGULATIONS.—Regulations prescribed under section __311 shall specify the manner in which a covered individual who does not have health insurance shall provide a certification for purposes of this paragraph.

(E) CONFIDENTIALITY AND NONDISCLOSURE.—

(i) PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION.—Nothing in this title shall be construed to require a health care provider to disclose information in violation of section 1177 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320d–6) or the regulations promulgated pursuant to section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (42 U.S.C. 1320d–2 note).

(ii) HEALTH INFORMATION RECORDS.—If an employer possesses health information about a covered individual or a covered individual's child, parent, spouse, domestic partner, or an individual related to the covered individual as described in subsection (b)(6), such information shall—

(I) be maintained on a separate form and in a separate file from other personnel information;

(II) be treated as a confidential medical record; and

(III) not be disclosed except to the affected covered individual or with the permission of the affected covered individual.

(3) CERTIFICATION IN THE CASE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An employer may require that a request for paid sick time for a purpose described in subsection (b)(7) be supported by any one of the following forms of documentation, but the employer may not specify the particular form of documentation to be provided:

(i) A police report indicating that the covered individual, or a member of the covered individual's family described in subsection (b)(7), was a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

(ii) A court order protecting or separating the covered individual or a member of the covered individual's family described in subsection (b)(7) from the perpetrator of an act of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or other evidence from the court or prosecuting attorney that the covered individual or a member of the covered individual's family described in subsection (b)(7) has appeared in court or is scheduled to appear in court in a proceeding related to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

(iii) Other documentation signed by a covered individual or volunteer working for a victim services organization, an attorney, a police officer, a medical professional, a social worker, an antiviolence counselor, or a member of the clergy, affirming that the covered individual or a member of the covered individual's family described in subsection (b)(7) is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of paragraph (2) shall apply to certifications under this paragraph, except that—

(i) subclauses (III) and (IV) of subparagraph (B)(i) and subparagraph (B)(ii) of such paragraph shall not apply;

(ii) the certification shall state the reason that the leave is required with the facts to be disclosed limited to the minimum necessary to establish a need for the covered individual to be absent from work, and the covered individual shall not be required to explain the details of the domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking involved; and

(iii) with respect to confidentiality under subparagraph (E) of such paragraph, any information provided to the employer under this paragraph shall be confidential, except to the extent that any disclosure of such information is—

(I) requested or consented to in writing by the covered individual; or

(II) otherwise required by applicable Federal or State law.

(f) RESTORATION TO POSITION.—The provisions of section 104(a) of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. 2614(a)) or section 6384 of title 5, United States Code, as the case may be, shall apply to a covered individual taking accrued or additional paid sick time, or emergency paid leave, under this title, and to the employer of the covered individual. Such provisions shall be enforced in accordance with this title.

(g) MAINTENANCE OF HEALTH BENEFITS.—The provisions of section 104(c)(1) of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. 2614(c)(1)) shall apply to a covered individual taking accrued or additional paid sick time, or emergency paid leave, under this title, and to the employer of the covered individual. Such provisions shall be enforced in accordance with this title.

(h) NO EFFECT ON ELIGIBILITY FOR SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME.—Any paid sick time or emergency paid leave provided to a covered individual under this title shall not be regarded as income or resources for any month, for purposes of determining the eligibility of the recipient (or the recipient's spouse or family) for benefits or assistance, or the amount or extent of benefits or assistance, under the supplemental security income program established under title XVI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.).

SEC. __303. EMPLOYMENT UNDER MULTIEMPLOYER COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS.

(a) EMPLOYERS.—An employer signatory to a multiemployer collective bargaining agreement may, consistent with its bargaining obligations and its collective bargaining agreement, fulfill its obligations under this title by making contributions to a multiemployer fund, plan, or program based on the hours of paid sick time, and of emergency paid leave, each of its employees is entitled to under this title while working under the multiemployer collective bargaining agreement, provided that the fund, plan, or program enables employees to secure pay from such fund, plan, or program based on the hours the employees have worked under the multiemployer collective bargaining agreement and for the amount of time and uses specified under this title.

(b) EMPLOYEES.—Employees who work under a multiemployer collective bargaining agreement into which their employers make contributions as provided in subsection (a) may secure pay from such fund, plan, or program based on hours the employees have worked under the multiemployer collective bargaining agreement for the amount of time and uses specified under this title.

SEC. __304. NOTICE REQUIREMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each employer shall notify each covered individual and include in any covered individual handbook the information described in paragraphs (1) through (4). Each employer shall post and keep posted a notice, to be prepared or approved in accordance with procedures specified in regulations prescribed under section __311, setting forth excerpts from, or summaries of, the pertinent provisions of this title including—

(1) information describing paid sick time and paid emergency leave available to covered individuals under this title;

(2) information pertaining to the filing of an action under this title;

(3) the details of the notice requirement for a foreseeable period of time under section __302(e)(1)(B); and

(4) information that describes—

(A) the protections that a covered individual has in exercising rights under this title; and

(B) how the covered individual can contact the Secretary (or other appropriate authority as described in section __306) if any of the rights are violated.

(b) LOCATION.—The notice described under subsection (a) shall be posted—

(1) in conspicuous places on the premises of the employer, where notices to covered individuals (including applicants) are customarily posted; or

(2) in covered individual handbooks.

(c) MODEL NOTICE.—Not later than 5 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor shall make publicly available a model notice that meets the requirements of subsection (a).

(d) VIOLATION; PENALTY.—Any employer who willfully violates the posting requirements of this section shall be subject to a civil fine in an amount not to exceed $100 for each separate offense.

SEC. __305. PROHIBITED ACTS.

(a) INTERFERENCE WITH RIGHTS.—

(1) EXERCISE OF RIGHTS.—It shall be unlawful for any employer to interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of, or the attempt to exercise, any right provided under this title, including—

(A) discharging or discriminating against (including retaliating against) any individual, including a job applicant, for exercising, or attempting to exercise, any right provided under this title;

(B) using the taking of paid sick time or emergency paid leave under this title as a negative factor in an employment action or work-related action, such as hiring, promotion, reducing hours or number of shifts, or a disciplinary action; or

(C) counting the paid sick time or emergency paid leave under a no-fault attendance policy or any other absence control policy.

(2) DISCRIMINATION.—It shall be unlawful for any employer to discharge or in any other manner discriminate against (including retaliating against) any individual, including a job applicant, for opposing any practice made unlawful by this title.

(b) INTERFERENCE WITH PROCEEDINGS OR INQUIRIES.—It shall be unlawful for any person to discharge or in any other manner discriminate against (including retaliating against) any individual, including a job applicant, because such individual—

(1) has filed an action, or has instituted or caused to be instituted any proceeding, under or related to this title;

(2) has given, or is about to give, any information in connection with any inquiry or proceeding relating to any right provided under this title; or

(3) has testified, or is about to testify, in any inquiry or proceeding relating to any right provided under this title.

(c) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to state or imply that the scope of the activities prohibited by section 105 of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. 2615) is less than the scope of the activities prohibited by this section.

SEC. __306. ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection—

(A) the term ''employee'' means an employee described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of section __301(5) or a corresponding covered individual; and

(B) the term ''employer'' means an employer described in subclause (I) or (II) of section __301(6)(A)(i).

(2) INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—To ensure compliance with the provisions of this title, or any regulation or order issued under this title, the Secretary shall have, subject to subparagraph (C), the investigative authority provided under section 11(a) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 211(a)), with respect to employers, employees, and other individuals affected.

(B) OBLIGATION TO KEEP AND PRESERVE RECORDS.—An employer shall make, keep, and preserve records pertaining to compliance with this title in accordance with section 11(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 211(c)) and in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

(C) REQUIRED SUBMISSIONS GENERALLY LIMITED TO AN ANNUAL BASIS.—The Secretary shall not require, under the authority of this paragraph, an employer to submit to the Secretary any books or records more than once during any 12-month period, unless the Secretary has reasonable cause to believe there may exist a violation of this title or any regulation or order issued pursuant to this title, or is investigating a charge pursuant to paragraph (4).

(D) SUBPOENA AUTHORITY.—For the purposes of any investigation provided for in this paragraph, the Secretary shall have the subpoena authority provided for under section 9 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 209).

(3) CIVIL ACTION BY EMPLOYEES OR INDIVIDUALS.—

(A) RIGHT OF ACTION.—An action to recover the damages or equitable relief prescribed in subparagraph (C) may be maintained against any employer in any Federal or State court

of competent jurisdiction by one or more employees or individuals or their representative for and on behalf of—

(i) the employees or individuals; or

(ii) the employees or individuals and others similarly situated.

(B) NO WAIVER.—In such an action brought by one or more employees or individuals or their representative for and on behalf of the persons described in clause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (A), to enforce the rights in this title, no court of competent jurisdiction may grant an employer's motion to compel arbitration, under chapter 1 of title 9, United States Code, or any analogous State arbitration statute, of the claims involved. An employee's right to bring an action on behalf of similarly situated employees to enforce such rights may not be subject to any private agreement that purports to require the employees to pursue claims on an individual basis.

(C) LIABILITY.—Any employer who violates section __305 (including a violation relating to rights provided under section __302) shall be liable to any employee or individual affected—

(i) for damages equal to—

(I) the amount of—

(aa) any wages, salary, employment benefits, or other compensation denied or lost by reason of the violation; or

(bb) in a case in which wages, salary, employment benefits, or other compensation have not been denied or lost, any actual monetary losses sustained as a direct result of the violation up to a sum equal to 56 hours of wages or salary for the employee or individual, or the specified period described in subsection (c)(2) or (d)(2) of section __302, or a combination of those hours and that period, as the case may be;

(II) the interest on the amount described in subclause (I) calculated at the prevailing rate; and

(III) an additional amount as liquidated damages; and

(ii) for such equitable relief as may be appropriate, including employment, reinstatement, and promotion.

(D) FEES AND COSTS.—The court in an action under this paragraph shall, in addition to any judgment awarded to the plaintiff, allow a reasonable attorney's fee, reasonable expert witness fees, and other costs of the action to be paid by the defendant.

(4) ACTION BY THE SECRETARY.—

(A) ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION.—The Secretary shall receive, investigate, and attempt to resolve complaints of violations of section __305 (including a violation relating to rights provided under section __302) in the same manner that the Secretary receives, investigates, and attempts to resolve complaints of violations of sections 6 and 7 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206 and 207).

(B) CIVIL ACTION.—The Secretary may bring an action in any court of competent jurisdiction to recover the damages described in paragraph (3)(C)(i).

(C) SUMS RECOVERED.—Any sums recovered by the Secretary pursuant to subparagraph (B) shall be held in a special deposit account and shall be paid, on order of the Secretary, directly to each employee or individual affected. Any such sums not paid to an employee or individual affected because of inability to do so within a period of 3 years shall be deposited into the Treasury of the United States as miscellaneous receipts.

(5) LIMITATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), an action may be brought under paragraph (3), (4), or (6) not later than 2 years after the date of the last event constituting the alleged violation for which the action is brought.

(B) WILLFUL VIOLATION.—In the case of an action brought for a willful violation of section __305 (including a willful violation relating to rights provided under section __302), such action may be brought within 3 years of the date of the last event constituting the alleged violation for which such action is brought.

(C) COMMENCEMENT.—In determining when an action is commenced under paragraph (3), (4), or (6) for the purposes of this paragraph, it shall be considered to be commenced on the date when the complaint is filed.

(6) ACTION FOR INJUNCTION BY SECRETARY.—The district courts of the United States shall have jurisdiction, for cause shown, in an action brought by the Secretary—

(A) to restrain violations of section __305 (including a violation relating to rights provided under section __302), including the restraint of any withholding of payment of wages, salary, employment benefits, or other compensation, plus interest, found by the court to be due to employees or individuals eligible under this title; or

(B) to award such other equitable relief as may be appropriate, including employment, reinstatement, and promotion.

(7) SOLICITOR OF LABOR.—The Solicitor of Labor may appear for and represent the Secretary on any litigation brought under paragraph (4) or (6).

(8) GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, in the case of the Government Accountability Office, the authority of the Secretary of Labor under this subsection shall be exercised by the Comptroller General of the United States.

(b) EMPLOYEES COVERED BY CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1995.—The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1301 et seq.) including section 401(d) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 1401(d)), to the Board (as defined in section 101 of that Act (2 U.S.C. 1301)), the corresponding Federal agency described in that section 401(d), or any person, alleging a violation of subsection (a)(1) of section 202 of that Act (2 U.S.C. 1312) shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures this title provides to that Board, the corresponding Federal agency, or any person, alleging an unlawful employment practice in violation of this title against an employee described in section __301(5)(C) or a corresponding covered individual.

(c) EMPLOYEES COVERED BY CHAPTER 5 OF TITLE 3, UNITED STATES CODE.—The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in chapter 5 of title 3, United States Code, to the President, the Merit Systems Protection Board, or any person, alleging a violation of section 412(a)(1) of that title, shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures this title provides to the President, that Board, or any person, respectively, alleging an unlawful employment practice in violation of this title against an employee described in section __301(5)(D) or a corresponding covered individual.

(d) EMPLOYEES COVERED BY CHAPTER 63 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE.—The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in title 5, United States Code, to an employing agency, provided in chapter 12 of that title to the Merit Systems Protection Board, or provided in that title to any person, alleging a violation of chapter 63 of that title shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures this title provides to that agency, that Board, or any person, respectively, alleging an unlawful employment practice in violation of this title against an employee described in section __301(5)(E) or a corresponding covered individual.

(e) REMEDIES FOR STATE EMPLOYEES.—

(1) WAIVER OF SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY.—A State's receipt or use of Federal financial assistance for any program or activity of a State shall constitute a waiver of sovereign immunity, under the 11th Amendment to the Constitution or otherwise, to a suit brought by a covered individual of that program or activity under this title for equitable, legal, or other relief authorized under this title.

(2) OFFICIAL CAPACITY.—An official of a State may be sued in the official capacity of the official by any covered individual who has complied with the procedures under subsection (a)(3), for injunctive relief that is authorized under this title. In such a suit the court may award to the prevailing party those costs authorized by section 722 of the Revised Statutes (42 U.S.C. 1988).

(3) APPLICABILITY.—With respect to a particular program or activity, paragraph (1) applies to conduct occurring on or after the day, after the date of enactment of this Act, on which a State first receives or uses Federal financial assistance for that program or activity.

(4) DEFINITION OF PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY.—In this subsection, the term ''program or activity'' has the meaning given the term in section 606 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d–4a).

SEC. __307. EDUCATION AND OUTREACH.

The Secretary may conduct a public awareness campaign to educate and inform the public of the requirements for paid sick time and paid emergency leave required by this title.

SEC. __308. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.

(a) FEDERAL AND STATE ANTIDISCRIMINATION LAWS.—Nothing in this title shall be construed to modify or affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, familial status, or any other protected status.

(b) STATE AND LOCAL LAWS.—Nothing in this title shall be construed to supersede (including preempting) any provision of any State or local law that provides greater paid sick time or leave rights (including greater amounts of paid sick time or leave, or greater coverage of those eligible for paid sick time or leave) than the rights established under this title.

SEC. __309. EFFECT ON EXISTING EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS.

(a) MORE PROTECTIVE.—Nothing in this title shall be construed to diminish the obligation of an employer to comply with any contract, collective bargaining agreement, or any employment benefit program or plan that provides greater paid sick leave or other leave rights to covered individuals than the rights established under this title.

(b) LESS PROTECTIVE.—The rights established for covered individuals under this title shall not be diminished by any contract, collective bargaining agreement, or any employment benefit program or plan.

SEC. __310. ENCOURAGEMENT OF MORE GENEROUS LEAVE POLICIES.

Nothing in this title shall be construed to discourage employers from adopting or retaining leave policies more generous than policies that comply with the requirements of this title.

SEC. __311. REGULATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) AUTHORITY.—Except as provided in paragraph (2) and subject to subsection (e), not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prescribe such regulations as are necessary to carry out this title with respect to employees described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of section __301(5), corresponding covered individuals, and other individuals affected by employers described in subclause (I) or (II) of section __301(6)(A)(i).

(2) GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE.—Subject to subsection (e), the Comptroller General of the United States shall prescribe the regulations with respect to employees of the Government Accountability Office, corresponding covered individuals, and other individuals affected by the Comptroller General of the United States.

(b) EMPLOYEES COVERED BY CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1995.—

(1) AUTHORITY.—Subject to subsection (e), not later than 90 days after the Secretary prescribes regulations under subsection (a), the Board of Directors of the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights shall prescribe (in accordance with section 304 of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1384)) and the corresponding Federal agency described in section 401(d) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 1401(d)) shall prescribe such regulations as are necessary to carry out this title with respect to employees described in section __301(5)(C), corresponding covered individuals, and other individuals affected by employers described in section __301(6)(A)(i)(III).

(2) AGENCY REGULATIONS.—The regulations prescribed under paragraph (1) shall be the same as substantive regulations promulgated by the Secretary to carry out this title except insofar as the Board may determine, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulations prescribed under paragraph (1), that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the rights and protections involved under this section.

(c) EMPLOYEES COVERED BY CHAPTER 5 OF TITLE 3, UNITED STATES CODE.—

(1) AUTHORITY.—Subject to subsection (e), not later than 90 days after the Secretary prescribes regulations under subsection (a), the President (or the designee of the President) shall prescribe such regulations as are necessary to carry out this title with respect to employees described in section __301(5)(D), corresponding covered individuals, and other individuals affected by employers described in section __301(6)(A)(i)(IV).

(2) AGENCY REGULATIONS.—The regulations prescribed under paragraph (1) shall be the same as substantive regulations promulgated by the Secretary to carry out this title except insofar as the President (or designee) may determine, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulations prescribed under paragraph (1), that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the rights and protections involved under this section.

(d) EMPLOYEES COVERED BY CHAPTER 63 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE.—

(1) AUTHORITY.—Subject to subsection (e), not later than 90 days after the Secretary prescribes regulations under subsection (a), the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall prescribe such regulations as are necessary to carry out this title with respect to employees described in section __301(5)(E), corresponding covered individuals, and other individuals affected by employers described in section __301(6)(A)(i)(V).

(2) AGENCY REGULATIONS.—The regulations prescribed under paragraph (1) shall be the same as substantive regulations promulgated by the Secretary to carry out this title except insofar as the Director may determine, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulations prescribed under paragraph (1), that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the rights and protections involved under this section.

(e) IMMEDIATE COMPLIANCE BY EMPLOYERS.—The rights and responsibilities specified in this title shall apply to employers on the first Sunday following enactment of this Act and employers shall comply on such date, without regard to whether regulations have been prescribed under this section.

SEC. __312. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this division such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2020 through 2022.

SEC. __313. EFFECTIVE DATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—This division takes effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) PREVIOUS DECLARATIONS.—If a public health emergency was declared before and remains in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, for purposes of this division (and in particular section __302(c) of this division) the public health emergency shall be considered to have been declared on the date of enactment of this Act, including an emergency described in section __301(12)(B).

SEC. __314. REPEAL.

This division is repealed, effective December 31, 2021.

SA 1560. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 6201, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. COVERAGE FOR ALLERGY DIAGNOSTIC TESTING SERVICES UNDER MEDICARE AND MEDICAID.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Allergies, when not properly diagnosed, cannot be effectively treated.

(2) Allergies to food, inhaled particles, or other sources can cause debilitating and, in some cases, fatal reactions.

(3) Allergies can substantially compound other illnesses, including asthma, emphysema, and adult obstructive pulmonary diseases, leading to social and economic costs for families and our Nation's health care system.

(4) According to clinical guidelines from the National Institutes of Health and recommendations from peer-reviewed literature, in vitro specific IgE tests and percutaneous tests are considered equivalent as confirmatory tests in terms of their sensitivity and accuracy.

(5) Despite these recommendations, some current Medicare local coverage determinations and Medicaid coverage policies deny equal access to in vitro specific IgE tests and percutaneous tests.

(6) In vitro specific IgE tests and percutaneous tests must be equally accessible for clinicians and patients to improve health outcomes, reduce system costs, and reduce current health care disparities caused by the lack of equal coverage.

(b) MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR ALLERGY DIAGNOSTIC TESTING SERVICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) is amended—

(A) in section 1902(a)—

(i) in paragraph (85), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(ii) in paragraph (86), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(iii) by inserting after paragraph (86) the following new paragraph:

''(87) provide, with respect to the provision of allergy diagnostic testing services (as defined in section 1905(gg)) under the State plan, for equality in the treatment of in vitro specific IgE tests and percutaneous tests with respect to—

''(A) any medical necessity or other coverage requirements established for such in vitro specific IgE and percutaneous tests;

''(B) any frequency limits established for such tests; and

''(C) any allergen unit limits established for such tests.''; and

(B) in section 1905—

(i) in subsection (r)—

(I) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (6); and

(II) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

''(5) Allergy diagnostic testing services (as defined in subsection (gg)).''; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(gg) ALLERGY DIAGNOSTIC TESTING SERVICES DEFINED.—The term 'allergy diagnostic testing services' means in vitro specific IgE tests and percutaneous tests that—

''(1) have been cleared under section 501(k), classified under section 513(f)(2), or approved under section 515 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act; and

''(2) are provided to individuals for the purpose of evaluating immunologic response to certain antigens.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the amendments made by this subsection shall apply with respect to items and services provided on or after January 1, 2021.

(B) EXCEPTION FOR STATE LEGISLATION.—In the case of a State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) that the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines requires State legislation in order for the respective plan to meet any requirement imposed by amendments made by this subsection, the respective plan shall not be regarded as failing to comply with the requirements of such title solely on the basis of its failure to meet such an additional requirement before the first day of the first calendar quarter beginning after the close of the first regular session of the State legislature that begins after the date of the enactment of this subsection. For purposes of the previous sentence, in the case of a State that has a 2-year legislative session, each year of the session shall be considered to be a separate regular session of the State legislature.

(c) MEDICARE COVERAGE FOR ALLERGY DIAGNOSTIC TESTING SERVICES.—

(1) COVERAGE.—Section 1861 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x) is amended—

(A) in subsection (s)(2)—

(i) in subparagraph (GG), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(ii) in subparagraph (HH), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(II) allergy diagnostic testing services (as defined in subsection (kkk));''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(kkk) ALLERGY DIAGNOSTIC TESTING SERVICES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'allergy diagnostic testing services' means in vitro specific IgE tests and percutaneous tests—

''(A) that have been cleared under section 501(k), classified under section 513(f)(2), or approved under section 515 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act; and

''(B) which are furnished to individuals for the purpose of evaluating immunologic response to certain antigens, as determined appropriate by the practitioner ordering such test.

''(2) EQUAL ACCESS TO TESTING METHODS.—The Secretary shall ensure equality in the treatment of in vitro specific IgE tests and percutaneous tests described in paragraph (1) with respect to—

''(A) any medical necessity or other coverage requirements established for such in vitro specific IgE and percutaneous tests;

''(B) any frequency limits established for such tests; and

''(C) any allergen unit limits established for a year for such tests.''.

(2) PAYMENT.—Section 1834 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(x) ALLERGY DIAGNOSTIC TESTING SERVICES.—For purposes of payment only, in the case of allergy diagnostic testing services (as defined in section 1861(kkk))—

''(1) in vitro specific IgE tests shall be treated as clinical diagnostic laboratory tests; and

''(2) percutaneous tests shall be treated as physicians' services.''.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply with respect to items and services furnished on or after January 1, 2021.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2020

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 12 noon, Thursday, March 19; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:59 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 19, 2020, at 12 noon.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RICK A. DEARBORN, OF OKLAHOMA, TO BE A DIRECTOR OF THE AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS, VICE JEFFREY R. MORELAND, TERM EXPIRED.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

MICHAEL P. O'RIELLY, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS FROM JULY 1, 2019 (REAPPOINTMENT)

INTER–AMERICAN FOUNDATION

CARLOS TRUJILLO, OF FLORIDA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER–AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 20, 2024, VICE J. KELLY RYAN, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BRETT P. GIROIR, OF TEXAS, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, VICE THOMAS FRIEDEN.

CARLOS TRUJILLO, OF FLORIDA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS), VICE KIMBERLY BREIER, RESIGNED.

KENNETH R. WEINSTEIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO JAPAN.

PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD

ADITYA BAMZAI, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 29, 2026. (REAPPOINTMENT)

THE JUDICIARY

HALA Y. JARBOU, OF MICHIGAN, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN, VICE ROBERT HOLMES BELL, RETIRED.

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on March 18, 2020 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

DAVID CAREY WOLL, JR., OF CONNECTICUT, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, VICE NEAL J. RACKLEFF, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON AUGUST 1, 2019.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 19, 2020 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 23

5:30 p.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
To receive a closed briefing on the current situation in Syria.
SVC–217

MARCH 25

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Cybersecurity
To hold hearings to examine the findings of the Cyberspace Solarium Commission.
SD–G50

MARCH 26

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2021 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD–G50

MARCH 31

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
To hold hearings to examine the final recommendations and report of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service.
SD–G50

POSTPONEMENTS

MARCH 24

10 a.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.
SD–538

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Subcommittee on Economic Policy
To hold hearings to examine winning the economic competition between the United States and China.
SD–538

MARCH 25

10 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To receive a closed briefing on Navy aircraft carrier survivability.
SVC–217

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2021 for Indian programs.
SD–628

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.
Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate passed H.R. 6201, Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1781–S1815

Measures Introduced: Nineteen bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 3515–3533, and S. Res. 546–547. **Pages S1805–06**

Measures Passed:

Families First Coronavirus Response Act: By 90 yeas to 8 nays (Vote No. 76), Senate passed H.R. 6201, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, 60 Senators having voted in the affirmative, and after taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S1790–96**

Rejected:

By 3 yeas to 95 nays (Vote No. 73), Paul Amendment No. 1556, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require a social security number for purposes of the child tax credit, to provide the President the authority to transfer funds as necessary, and to terminate United States military operations and reconstruction activities in Afghanistan. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the amendment, having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Pages S1790–91**

By 47 yeas to 51 nays (Vote No. 74), Murray/Gillibrand Amendment No. 1559, to provide Americans with paid sick time and paid leave so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the amendment, having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Pages S1792–93, S1795**

By 50 yeas to 48 nays (Vote No. 75), Johnson Amendment No. 1558, to strike Federally mandated sick pay and paid family leave and replace it with financial support provided through State administered unemployment insurance systems and funds. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the amendment, having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Pages S1793–95, S1795–96**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Rick A. Dearborn, of Oklahoma, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years.

Michael P. O'Rielly, of New York, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission for a term of five years from July 1, 2019.

Carlos Trujillo, of Florida, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Foundation for a term expiring September 20, 2024.

Brett P. Giroir, of Texas, to be Representative of the United States on the Executive Board of the World Health Organization.

Carlos Trujillo, of Florida, to be Assistant Secretary of State (Western Hemisphere Affairs).

Kenneth R. Weinstein, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to Japan.

Aditya Bamzai, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board for a term expiring January 29, 2026.

Hala Y. Jarbou, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Michigan. **Page S1815**

Nomination Withdrawn: Senate received notification of withdrawal of the following nomination:

David Carey Woll, Jr., of Connecticut, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, which was sent to the Senate on August 1, 2019. **Page S1815**

Messages from the House: **Page S1804**

Executive Communications: **Pages S1804–05**

Petitions and Memorials: **Page S1805**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page S1806**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S1807–15**

Record Votes: Four record votes were taken today. (Total—76) **Pages S1791, S1795–96**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 5:59 p.m., until 12 noon on Thursday, March 19, 2020. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1815.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

The House was not in session today. The House is scheduled to meet at 9 a.m. on Thursday, March 19, 2020.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2020

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the **SENATE**

12 noon, Thursday, March 19

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will be in a period of morning business.

Next Meeting of the **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

9 a.m., Thursday, March 19

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 9 a.m.

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