sacrifice, and patience on the part of our people.

It is on every American to exercise these values: Do not gather in large groups. Don't hoard crucial goods. Keep your distance from those you must be near. Protect yourself and others by washing your hands, covering your cough and sneeze, and cleaning commonly used surfaces. Work from home if you can. Check on your neighbors. Call your relatives. Offer to help each other, especially the most vulnerable. We are all in this together.

Much as we did before, we must shed party labels and put aside partisan politics. We must band together and hold on to our national identity, our families, and, most importantly, our faith.

Throughout history, Americans have risen to the occasion when confronted with crises. I am confident this time will be no different.

It is up to each and every American to fight the spread of this deadly virus. Countless lives depend on it. The days and months ahead will be tough for everyone. But just like post-World War II, a safer, a healthier, and a more prosperous United States of America is just around the corner.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SENATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday I introduced the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act: Senate Republicans' bold proposal to continue combating this health crisis and the economic crisis it is causing. And I called on our Democratic counterparts to join us immediately at the table for urgent discussions so the Senate can deliver measured relief to the American people as soon as humanly possible.

I am glad to say that talks are already well underway. Earlier this morning, a number of our committee chairmen began indepth, bipartisan talks with their Democratic counterparts. We were joined by representatives from the administration, and those talks continue right now as we speak.

Here are the next steps: These Member-level discussions will proceed with the goal of reaching agreements on each of four components of the legislation by the end of today—by the end of today, agreements on each of these four components.

This would allow the first procedural vote to occur before the end of the day tomorrow, and that would allow a bipartisan package focused on immediate challenges to pass the Senate Monday.

The Nation's needs and expectations are perfectly clear. Workers, families, small businesses, and the foundations of our economy itself need swift action. And in the Senate, ''swift'' means bipartisan.

The Senate rose to the occasion earlier this month. We united across party lines to pass billions in quick funding to support the medical response, and we did it again just this week. We passed the more modest proposal that came over from the Democratic House quickly and in a bipartisan fashion.

Now our Nation needs a major next step, and we need it fast. That is why Senate Republicans produced a bold initial proposal to give shape and structure to these discussions.

First, our CARES Act will deliver direct financial help as quickly as possible to the American people. Senate Republicans want to put cash in Americans' hands.

For Americans who have lost work, this would be the quickest possible first wave of government assistance to supplement unemployment insurance and help with bills and immediate needs.

For our Nation's seniors, this would supplement Social Security and provide further relief to those who are at heightened risk and have had to change their routines literally overnight.

And for Americans still working, this infusion of money would provide a little more certainty in this very uncertain moment and the opportunities to invest in local economies where possible.

Second, our proposal would provide the quickest possible access to desperately needed liquidity for small businesses all across our country. Our proposal would use existing channels and small businesses' existing lending relationships to provide hundreds of billions of dollars in emergency capital, a significant cash infusion as fast as possible so that more small businesses can hold on to their workers, weather this disruption, and come out on the other side instead of having to resort to layoffs or shutdowns right away.

So no tangled new bureaucracies, no delay of this urgent aid while we try to redesign complex programs from the ground up, just the most direct path—the most direct path to the cash that small businesses need to keep making payroll, while, in many cases, the government itself is chasing away their customers for the sake of public health.

This straightforward approach is already earning support. A coalition of small business advocates has already written to express their hope that ''both Republicans and Democrats can come together'' to pass this.

Third, our bill recognizes a big, structural, national crisis requires a big, structural response. Let me say that again. Our bill recognizes that a big, structural national crisis requires a big, structural response.

We want to empower the Treasury Department to engage in targeted lending—not bailouts but loans—to key sectors and industries which this pandemic is hurting.

Again, we want to preserve employer-employee relationships wherever we can. We have to fight to protect jobs, and we need to recognize that our Nation will need industries to come back online quickly on the other side of the crisis.

Fourth—and this is crucial—our legislation will continue to push surged resources to the frontlines of the medical battle against the virus itself. We want to expand access to testing and treatment to further encourage and speed up research on therapeutics and eventually vaccines, to continue to fund the hospitals and health centers that are treating patients, and we want to expand healthcare workers' access to critical equipment and supplies, including—including—respirator masks.

These are the four big things our bill seeks to do. As we speak, at this very moment, Senators on both sides are discussing the details and exchanging suggestions on all four of the pillars that I have just outlined.

So, once again, this will not be the first bill we pass to combat this crisis or the second, and I do not expect it will be the last.

This legislation does not need to contain every piece of the ongoing national effort. In fact, that would be impossible. But everyone—everyone—from public health experts to economists, to working families of this country—everyone—has made it clear that we need to deliver relief and we need to deliver it now.

We need to go big. We need to minimize new complexity, and we need to move swiftly. We need to push immediate relief to Americans. We need to keep Americans employed as much as possible and help job creators literally stay afloat. We need to continue taking action to stand with medical professionals and protect our Nation's health.

Laid-off workers cannot wait. Struggling Main Street businesses cannot wait. Our hospitals and health centers cannot wait.

So, as I said, I hope these Member-level discussions will be able to produce agreements in principle on all four components by the end of the day today. In fact, they must reach agreement by the end of the day today. That would leave tomorrow for drafting legislative text and for the first procedural vote on the shell. And that should allow a bipartisan package, focused on immediate challenges, to pass the Senate on Monday.

The crisis is moving fast. The Senate is here, we are working, and we are going to deliver.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.