We are battling an unprecedented global crisis, and it calls for an unprecedented response. While no legislation is perfect, I'm glad Congress could come together to send this package to the President's desk to quickly deliver the relief our country desperately needs.

The CARES Act will provide families with immediate support by putting cash in their pockets. It will protect Americans' livelihoods by keeping workers employed and helping businesses stay afloat to ensure American workers have jobs to come back to. This package stands up for our heroes fighting on the frontlines by ensuring our nurses, doctors, and countless health care professionals have the resources they need to continue saving lives.

When faced with a challenge, America always rises to the occasion. I'm proud of the way our country has rallied together to support one another in the face of this crisis, and I'm proud we can finally deliver the quick relief Americans have been asking for. We will beat this virus, and our nation will emerge stronger than ever before.

MIDDLE CLASS HEALTH BENEFITS TAX REPEAL ACT OF 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 2020

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, through no fault of their own, hospitals, families, and businesses are facing a public health crisis causing unprecedented hardships for millions of employees and families. In the 3rd District, I have heard from heartbroken families who don't know how to afford next month's rent, small business owners who don't know how they will pay their loyal employees or if they will be able to hold out and reopen their doors ever again, and healthcare workers desperate for more medical supplies. I applaud President Trump and the Senate for focusing on the dire and urgent needs of hospitals, families, and small businesses affected by COVID–19 and standing firm against loading this bill with radical leftist gimmicks that were included in Speaker PELOSI's unserious legislation. I am obviously deeply cautious about the staggering cost, but the cost of inaction today means putting a price tag on lives tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and the President in doing what is necessary to support the American people and position our economy to make a strong recovery once we defeat this terrible virus.

MIDDLE CLASS HEALTH BENEFITS TAX REPEAL ACT OF 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 2020

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.

This $2 trillion legislation—the largest aid package in American history—is shaped to help meet the great challenges we face during this crisis.

As Americans stay home to slow the spread of the deadly coronavirus, the economy has ground to a halt. Nearly 3.3 million Americans filed unemployment claims last week, an all-time record. Our frontline health care workers are working around the clock to care for the tens of thousands of Americans who have contracted the virus, requiring a surge of hospital beds, masks, personal protective equipment, and ventilators to safely care for the sick.

The Democratic House has led the way to respond to this emergency. At the beginning of March, we passed a bipartisan $8.3 billion funding package to strengthen our nation's public health response to the coronavirus. A week later, we passed another bipartisan bill, the Families First Act to provide paid sick leave and nutrition assistance to working families, as well as free coronavirus testing to anyone who needs it.

Today's legislation continues Congress's fast-moving bipartisan emergency response to the pandemic. Democrats fought successfully to flip the original Senate bill from a trickle-down, corporation-first approach to a families and workers-first approach.

The four major pillars of the legislation are: A "Marshall Plan" for our Health Care System, Expanded Unemployment Benefits and Direct Cash Assistance for Americans, Assistance for Small Businesses, Relief for state, tribal, and local governments.

A $150 billion "Marshall Plan" for our health systems with funding to hospitals and other health providers to buy protective equipment, testing supplies, new construction, and to cover unreimbursed costs or lost revenue. Funding is also provided to increase the supply of health care equipment in the Strategic National Stockpile, implement the Defense Production Act, and boost FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund.

$260 billion for unemployment insurance, providing an additional $600 weekly for every American receiving unemployment benefits. Many Americans will also receive a one-time cash payment of up to $1,200, and $500 per child.

A $350 billion small business rescue plan that provides loan forgiveness grants to small businesses to keep their workers on payroll and help to pay rent and utility bills. Coverage also goes to independent contractors, gig workers, and nonprofits.

A $150 billion relief fund to assist state, local, and tribal governments maintain essential public services for their residents.

Democrats also successfully prevented secret corporate bailouts. Thanks to a strong Democratic effort, corporations that receive aid must use it to keep workers on their payrolls. They're prohibited from giving bonuses to executives, exercise buyback of stocks, or give dividends to shareholders. We launched many attempts to remove the $500 billion fund under the control of the Secretary of the Treasury, but we were unable to do so because of the support of Senator MITCH MCCONNELL and the White House. What we were able to secure is an Inspector General to oversee the funds to ensure transparency and accountability, and a Board to do so as well.

Finally, the legislation includes $100 billion in emergency appropriations for education, childcare, housing, and homelessness, as well as grants for states to prepare for the upcoming election in November.

Taken together, this legislation will go a long way to help workers, families, small businesses, state and local governments, hospitals, and health care workers, and California will receive approximately $15 billion from the legislation.

Congress's work to respond to the pandemic is not complete, and the House is already working on a fourth package to help our nation during these critical times.

I ask my colleagues to join me in voting for this legislation to come to the aid of the American people during this time of crisis. They deserve swift action by a united Congress.

MIDDLE CLASS HEALTH BENEFITS TAX REPEAL ACT OF 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLIE CRIST

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 2020

Mr. CRIST. Mr. Speaker, I add my voice in support of the CARES Act.

This sweeping, bipartisan legislation is the work of a Congress that soberly understands the gravity of the emergency facing our nation. It is only because Congress has set aside partisanship and disagreements that I am able to say, help, my friends, is on the way.

For the 3.3 million who filed for unemployment last week and the millions more who have not yet been able to navigate states' overwhelmed unemployment servers, this new law will provide an additional $600 per week in Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.

I fought for this $15 per hour living wage to give a hand to the servers, bartenders, and other tipped employees that are the backbone of Florida's tourism and services sector.

The law provides a $1200 check to all Americans, including those on Social Security, who make less than $75,000.

It includes a $100 billion "Marshall Plan" for our hospitals and public health system and $150 billion for states and tribes.

It provides over $350 billion for small businesses on Main Street in grants, forgivable loans, and tax credits so they can make payroll and pay monthly bills to keep their businesses afloat.

The new law provides 6 months relief for federal student loan payments, blocks evictions for 150 days, blocks foreclosures for 60 days, and offers mortgage forbearance for up to 6 months—all penalty-free. No interest, fees, or negative information on your credit report.

This bill is neither perfect nor the last word. As this crisis unfolds and America rises to face unthinkable challenges, so too must their Representatives in Congress.

We need more masks, protective equipment, and ventilators. And we need testing everywhere.

We need more help for our cities like St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Largo, and Pinellas Park.

We need to do more for essential employees—the grocery store checkers, truck drivers, farmers, sanitation workers, pharmacists, cooks, home care workers, and delivery workers that are enabling the rest of us to shelter-