EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

MIDDLE CLASS HEALTH BENEFITS TAX REPEAL ACT OF 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. JAHANA HAYES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 2020

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, the novel coronavirus, has become a global pandemic that has brought us to the brink. Connecticut has been hit particularly hard by this virus, with more than 1,000 confirmed cases to date. Nonessential businesses in my state have been shuttered, crippling our local economy, squeezing small businesses, and causing painful layoffs. Our hospitals, frontline health workers, and first responders are overwhelmed working without enough resources, personal protective equipment, and tests to combat the rapid spread of this unrelenting disease.

There is no more time to waste. Congress must act now to combat this virus and get the states and the American people the support and resources they need. I applaud House leadership for their hard work on this bill and for getting a deal for the American people. I was indeed frustrated that big business seemingly stepped to the front of the line in earlier proposals, but I commend my colleagues for pushing back against toxic provisions that would bail out those corporations, no strings attached, without providing the requisite support to hospitals and everyday Americans.

This bill is not perfect, and does not include everything I advocated for, but it does include critical funding that will save lives and help my constituents in Connecticut's 5th District recover from the economic fallout of this public health crisis. It includes $150 billion for our health care system, nearly $16 billion for veteran health care, over $20 billion for SNAP, WIC, and other nutrition programs, direct payments to Americans to help with the financial burden this virus has caused, over $350 billion in funding for small businesses and nonprofits, $150 billion in grants for states and local municipalities, the expansion of unemployment benefits to make sure workers everywhere can land on their feet after losing their job. Finally, it provides over $35 billion for early childhood education programs, K through 12 schools, and higher education institutions in response to the severe disruptions caused by the pandemic—including funds that will help students and teachers with distance learning.

This third relief package is a monumental step forward, but more work needs to be done to respond to this public health and economic emergency. When future legislation is being discussed, I hope to include more relief for volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel, who are the first responders in many of the communities in my district. Their work is so vitally important, now more than ever, and we must ensure they have the proper equipment and protections in place to do their jobs. I hope more funding will be made available for rural health providers in the Northwestern Corner of Connecticut. We must help the Postal Service and its employees, which have been hit hard by the effects of the virus. I want to see more support for teachers as they adapt to a new reality of distance learning, and more relief for student loan borrowers. I hope that we will see an expansion in funding for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This is particularly important as we look to combat the alarmingly high rates of infection in nursing homes.

The impact that this virus is having on my district, Connecticut, and our nation, cannot be understated, and we must do everything to help Americans overcome the challenges we are facing. Now is the time for unity, cooperation and immediate action. For these reasons I support this bill and look forward to it being signed into law.

MIDDLE CLASS HEALTH BENEFITS TAX REPEAL ACT OF 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID B. McKINLEY

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 2020

Mr. McKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, in times of crisis the American people look to their elected officials to step up and work together to do what is best for the country. The CARES Act is an unprecedented response to a public health and economic emergency unlike any we've seen before.

Americans are facing something many of them have never encountered before. The coronavirus is threatening the health of their loved ones as well as their financial livelihoods. Leaving them feeling worried and scared. This bill will give the health care professionals and researchers on the front lines the resources they need to fight the virus and ultimately develop a vaccine and cure. It will help individuals feeling financial hardship by providing economic assistance and expanding unemployment benefits for those who have lost their jobs. It will help small businesses stay alive and maintain payroll during this period of distress. It will ensure children receive the nutrition they need while schools are closed.

Now is a time for all Americans to pull together to help fight this invisible enemy. This is the third time Congress has acted in response to this crisis. More action will likely be needed, but this legislation represents an important step to give Americans confidence that the government can meet this public health and economic challenge.

MIDDLE CLASS HEALTH BENEFITS TAX REPEAL ACT OF 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. JEFF FORTENBERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 2020

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, this is an unprecedented crisis, requiring an unprecedented response. People are suffering, and America is uncertain. This legislation acts to protect America's health care system, protect individuals and families, and protect small business.

With this battle plan from our government—and the sacrifice and courage of the American people—we will fight back, we will help our sick, and we will restore our great nation. I support the bill.

MIDDLE CLASS HEALTH BENEFITS TAX REPEAL ACT OF 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. PATRICK T. McHENRY

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 2020

Mr. McHENRY. Mr. Speaker, this unprecedented time in our nation's history calls for an unprecedented response. This is not like any economic or health issue we've faced. This is a voluntary shut down of vast parts of the economy in an effort to save American lives, and, as a result, we need the CARES Act.

It's important to remember, this is not a stimulus package, this is emergency relief. And this is not a bailout for bad business decisions or one specific industry. The CARES Act, while not perfect, is the appropriate action to provide necessary resources to get Americans and our economy through this national emergency.

My ultimate goal for this legislation is to keep Americans employed. Specifically, this bill will provide relief to our small businesses to help them keep employees on payroll and prepare those businesses to be up and running as soon as America is open for business again.

The CARES Act provides $377 billion in small business loans. This will allow a small business to go to any federally insured financial institution to access those loans—many of which will be forgiven if used to support keeping employees on payroll, another important provision to help keep folks employed.

This bill also provides Treasury Secretary Mnuchin and Fed Chairman Powell with the resources they need to address the liquidity crisis facing the main street businesses that employ millions of Americans. The CARES Act allows them the flexibility to meet the needs of American businesses in the coming weeks and months by allocating $500 billion to an Exchange Stabilization Fund, or ESF. This

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