done. Even though the COVID is still with us, we must continue working together and following the guidelines so we can protect both our economy and our health.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

RESTART ACT

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, last week, I traveled around the great State of Indiana on my RESTART tour.

I visited small businesses up and down the State—eight cities, in fact—where we have seen so many Hoosiers adversely impacted by this pandemic. Like many other States, Indiana is starting to open up our economy, and I know so many Hoosiers welcome that. Our Governor, Eric Holcomb, has been implementing a five-stage plan for safely reopening Indiana's economy.

The cities on my tour have businesses that are in various stages of reopening. Restaurants like Catablu Grille in Fort Wayne, Arni's in Lafayette, and Woody's Library in Carmel are open at 50-percent capacity right now. The nonprofit Terre Haute Children's Museum remains closed, unfortunately, and is struggling to pay its employees. I visited Zimmer Biomet Hibbard, which is a medical device company in Valparaiso. I enjoyed the tour and visiting with the employees, but I discovered that its sales had dropped 95 percent in March. Fortunately, it received a Paycheck Protection Program loan, and that enabled it to keep all 23 of its employees on the payroll.

It is clear that we need to continue evaluating additional relief measures for small businesses and Indiana's nonprofits. My RESTART Act is a viable approach to help keep our hardest hit businesses and nonprofits going. The RESTART Act is a bipartisan measure I introduced with Senator BENNET. The effort here is to build upon the success of the Paycheck Protection Program. We have seen that more than 74,000 Hoosier businesses have benefited from PPP, with loans totaling nearly $9.4 billion in the State of Indiana. Just for context, that is an average loan of about $130,000. These are for small businesses like those that we see up and down our State.

The Paycheck Protection Program requires funds to be spent in just 8 weeks, but most restaurants, gyms, boutiques, and so many other businesses were not permitted to be open during part or all of that 8-week period. So the first part of the RESTART Act merely extends the timeframe to 16 weeks for our Nation's hardest hit businesses.

Secondly, we know that the PPP was meant to be a bridge to reopening the economy, but many small businesses have much longer bridges to cross. That is why our new RESTART Program would provide loans that would cover up to 6 months of payroll and fixed operating expenses. That is just for those businesses that have taken a substantial revenue hit during this coronavirus pandemic. My RESTART initiative would provide needed funds with the flexibility for employers to pay bills and to implement social distancing measures, like with those Plexiglas dividers I have seen at so many businesses. Most importantly, it would bring employees back to work, which is exactly where they want to be.

Over the last several weeks, I have spoken to more than 22,000 Hoosiers by using Zoom teleconferencing capabilities, having conference calls, and other means. I have to say I am truly inspired by the way Hoosiers have come together to help one another during this pandemic. Everyone has done his part. Hoosiers want to work, and business owners are eager to pay them. The RESTART Act can help make sure this happens, and I hope my colleagues will give it strong consideration in the coming days.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator BRAUN and I be allowed to complete our remarks prior to the rollcall votes.

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I have to say that Tennesseans are enjoying being out and about. They are so thrilled to see the restart of our economy. Whether you are going to hair salons, restaurants, shopping centers, office parks, or manufacturing facilities, what we are hearing from Tennesseans is: Thank goodness we can get back to work. They are grateful that they have had the PPP to help them bridge from the shutdown to the restart. There has been $8.8 billion that has made its way into our State through the PPP program, and our Governor, our Tennessee General Assembly, and our mayors are really working diligently to be certain that our economy opens up, that people are at work safely, and that we continue to defeat this COVID–19.

Over the past few months, we have seen Congress push forward, putting about $3 trillion into the economy for a restart, and State and local governments have already put over $139 billion worth of aid to good use by supporting local healthcare, helping to rescue businesses, and keeping companies working and local payrolls going—keeping people on the job.

Our Governor and general assembly in Tennessee have just announced a new program that they are doing in conjunction with local businesses. Now, imagine for a moment what it was like to watch the economy tumble from the perspective of a community that was already struggling and trying to make ends meet. The pandemic caused catastrophic damage to the traditional economy and also to many of the service organizations that were there to meet needs. In Tennessee, as in many States, struggling communities depend on these nonprofit groups. This is why we fought so hard to include eligibility for nonprofits in the rescue funding packages.

I will tell you that this is making a difference in Tennessee for some of our nonprofit organizations, like the East Tennessee-based Appalachia Service Project. ASP teams travel throughout Central Appalachia. They repair homes for low-income families. Mayors in the communities that ASP visit are running on tight budgets, and they depend on volunteers to fix up unsafe or uninhabitable homes. You can only imagine how it felt to the people at ASP to watch their funding evaporate, knowing that the leaky roof that needed attention over in Sneedville would end up turning into a rotten floor and a moldy wall and would be a safety hazard for the individuals who lived there. Fortunately, ASP was able to get an SBA loan that gave it a little bit of breathing room. Although it has had to cancel its volunteer program, its essential staff and contractors will be able to continue working all through the summer.

The various rescue programs that Congress agreed to implement were not perfect by any means, but did they have a positive effect? From what we are hearing in Tennessee, they did, and they have been put to good use.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, I am a Main Street entrepreneur. I have spent my career building a little business into a large one over many years in my hometown. My wife, as well, has operated a home accessory and gift store on Main Street, literally. I am elated to see the American economy starting to get off to a smart restart.

I addressed, in a couple of floor speeches before we left in March, the question of how to reopen our economy. I believe businesses are disciplined and ready to pay attention to the rules—the new normal—to make sure their employees and their customers stay safe. Business owners will follow the rules. It is in their own best interests to do so. They have much to lose from a new spike in the coronavirus. Businesses are always more adept, more agile than government, and I am heartened to see the innovative approaches many businesses are taking across our country to address this challenge.

The virus does not affect all populations, industries, and areas of our country in the same way. So, naturally, the reopening in Indianapolis will be different from that on Main Street in Jasper, IN.

We should remember that although this presents challenges, a one-size-fits-all is rarely the best policy course of action, and decisions that affect citizens are best made by the level of government closest to them—mayors,