To my knowledge, the Republican leader of the Senate still has not referred to Joe Biden as President-elect. Will he change his tune now that the electoral college has once again confirmed his victory? Will the rest of my Republican Senate colleagues do the same?

After no evidence of widespread voter fraud was found in the country, after State election officials corroborated the accuracy of the results in every State in the country, after the Trump campaign's legal team racked up an astonishing win-loss record of 1 and 59, after the Supreme Court summarily dismissed two ludicrous efforts by Republicans to invalidate the results in swing States, will the Republican Party in Congress, here in the Senate, finally acknowledge the results of an election that was determined over a month ago?

Just how long are Republicans going to keep up this charade, which has become a national embarrassment? Even now, the Chairman of the Homeland Security Committee is planning to hold a hearing this week about what he calls ''election irregularities.''

Look, our Republican colleagues don't have to like the results of the election, but they have a solemn responsibility to accept them. They have a duty to confer legitimacy on them. Instead, for the past month, they have given President Trump the space to promote wild conspiracy theories about election fraud and poison Americans' faith in our democracy.

As the electoral college casts the majority of its votes for Joe Biden—the same number of votes that President Trump called a landslide 4 years ago—our Republican colleagues must do now what they should have done a month ago: Accept the legitimacy of Joe Biden's election to the Presidency of the United States.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Thomas L. Kirsch II, of Indiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as we all know by now, late Friday evening, the world received the news that we have been waiting, hoping, and praying for since March. The first COVID–19 vaccine was approved here in the United States. The vaccine was developed by Pfizer and its German partner BioNtech and was found to be 95 percent effective in preventing COVID–19 during clinical trials—extensive clinical trials.

The leaders of Operation Warp Speed immediately mobilized the distribution plan, and the first doses of the vaccine are arriving at healthcare facilities across the country today. Texas's initial shipment of nearly 225,000 doses will be administered to our healthcare workers this week by our healthcare workers, and we will provide these heroes with the protection they need to continue their fight on our behalf on the frontlines.

This is a turning point in our war against COVID, and the significance of this victory in such an expedited timeframe cannot be overstated. I want to thank the brilliant men and women who made this feat possible. There are the researchers and scientists who developed the lifesaving vaccine, as well as the volunteers who participated in clinical trials. There are the manufacturers that are rapidly producing millions of doses and distributors who are getting those doses to sites across the country as quickly as possible. Of course, there are the hospitals, pharmacies, and our incredible healthcare workers who will lead the vaccine effort. The race to a COVID vaccine will be remembered as one of the greatest human achievements of our generation, and these brave and brilliant individuals helped make it possible.

I want to remind all of us that while this is a huge milestone and one that should absolutely be celebrated, we are not out of the dark yet. The light at the end of the tunnel is getting bigger and brighter, but we still have a ways to go, and each of us has our own part to play in getting us there. For the American people, that means stopping the spread through the same habits that we learned all year—washing your hands, wearing a mask, practicing social distancing, and taking extra care to protect our most vulnerable friends and neighbors. Of course, this holiday season is not a time to forget the habits we built over the last several months but to double down on them.

While this is a development to be celebrated and a day we have been looking for for a long time, Congress has not yet done its job. For months on end, the American people have asked for additional financial support to weather this storm, and so far we have not seen any progress. Our Democratic colleagues blocked bill after bill, saying more of the words of Speaker PELOSI: Nothing is better than something.

Well, our Democratic colleagues stood in the way of investing more in vaccine distribution, extending unemployment insurance benefits, helping our small businesses keep their workers on payroll, and giving our schools the resources they need in order to provide education to our students safely. Our Democratic colleagues didn't block these bills because they disagree with the content of the bills; they simply refuse to engage if we do not concede to their controversial and outrageous demands.

At first, Democrats refused to back off the completely absurd bill passed in the House called the Heroes Act, which includes things like diversity studies for the marijuana industry and tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires. While they eventually realized how unrealistic their position was, they now stand firm in providing a bailout for cities and States that have been—some of which have been grossly mismanaged for decades.

Over the last several months, our Democratic colleagues have repeatedly blocked legislation that would have poured half a trillion dollars more into our fight against COVID–19 because it didn't include their far-fetched, partisan priorities. Our Democratic colleagues have wasted a lot of time in playing games with this pandemic relief, and the clock on this Congress is quickly running out. Congress needs to pass another bill this week, and I encourage our Democratic colleagues to start compromising and quit the grandstanding. They have shown us time and again, when you sit down at the negotiating table with an all-or-nothing attitude, the result is always nothing, and that is all they have to show for their obstruction over the last months since we passed the CARES Act.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. President, on another topic, last Friday, another important thing happened—the Senate passed the National Defense Authorization Act with broad bipartisan support and sent it to the President for his signature. This marks the 60th year in a row that we have completed the defense spending bill, and that is as it should be. Our national security is the No. 1 priority here in Washington, DC, and for our entire Nation.

Texas servicemembers will receive higher salaries and stronger support for their families because of this legislation. That includes assistance for military spouses whose careers involve relicensing, and it includes high-quality childcare on military bases. This legislation will also bring some serious updates and improvements to Texas military bases. Joint Base San Antonio, Joint Bases Fort Worth and Fort Hood, and the Pantex Plant in Amarillo will all receive additional funding for updates and facilities to improve their capabilities and mission readiness.