Just yesterday, we confirmed a nominee whose parents emigrated from Taiwan to become the U.S. Trade Representative. That is notable and important progress. But, unfortunately, the past few years have shown us that America has not excised the age-old demon of racism, and to too many it has become acceptable, permissible, or just shrug your shoulders. That cannot be.

With respect to the Asian-American community specifically and all communities, we must condemn rhetoric that is racist. In this case, we must condemn any rhetoric that blames the Chinese people for the coronavirus. President Trump did that, despicably, and that notion was too often encouraged by others who repeated his harsh, nasty, and bigoted words.

We must stand beside and stand up for our Asian-American brothers and sisters. Americans of every faith, every color, every gender and sexual orientation must band together against these dark forces of hate. As I said, they are always with us, but somehow after the 4 years of the Trump Presidency, they are rising to the surface and seem too acceptable to too many people. Fight them, fight them, fight them we must.

As we mourn with the people of Georgia, let us recommit ourselves to that most American of creeds that is right above the mantle where you sit, Mr. President, ''e pluribus unum.'' Out of many, one.

America: ''e pluribus unum.'' Out of many, one.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on nominations, today, the Senate will vote to confirm another member of President Biden's Cabinet, Xavier Becerra, to serve as Secretary of Health and Human Services.

In truth, Attorney General Becerra's nomination should not have taken this long. From the moment the Attorney General Becerra was announced as President Biden's pick for HHS, Senate Republicans have tried to derail his nomination. Their arguments almost verge on the ridiculous. They complain loudly that he had no direct experience as a medical professional, even though Republicans voted in lockstep to install Alex Azar, a pharmaceutical executive, who raised drug prices and tried to undermine our Nation's health law as the previous HHS Secretary.

Becerra, by contrast, has decades of standing up for working and middle-class Americans in Congress, fighting to protect and expand Medicare and Medicaid and working to safeguard our healthcare system from attacks by the Trump administration.

As the Biden administration works to defeat this pandemic, the President deserves to have his Cabinet confirmed, especially a post as important as HHS Secretary. I look forward to completing his nomination today.

A few days after Democrats gained control of the Senate, we had big tasks ahead of us right away. I said that we had three important priorities to do quickly: One, the impeachment trial of Donald Trump; two, big and bold COVID relief; and, three, President Biden's Cabinet. We have already finished the first two priorities, and very soon we are going to finish the third.

I want to thank my colleagues, my Democratic colleagues, for working so quickly, so hard, and in such a unified team effort to allow all of this to happen. I am very proud of what we have done in these first few months.

Later today, the Senate will take its first vote on the nomination of Boston Mayor Marty Walsh to be our Nation's Labor Secretary. Early next week, after we confirm him, the Senate will have confirmed every available Cabinet Secretary and many more Cabinet-level appointments besides. That is excellent progress, and, again, I want to thank my colleagues in the Senate on both sides of the aisle for their votes in supporting these fine nominees.

What does it mean? It means the Biden administration will have the personnel in place to implement the American Rescue Plan, finish the fight against COVID–19, and bring our country roaring back. In the meantime, the Senate must continue to work to get the rest of the President's team in place.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on the American Rescue Plan. As Americans learn more and more about ARP, the American Rescue Plan, the more popular it becomes and the more optimistic Americans feel about our economic recovery.

Across the country, the support for the rescue plan has risen to over 70 percent. In January of this year, before President Biden took office and Democrats assumed the majority of the Senate, more than four in five Americans believed America was on the wrong track; less than one in five said it was on the right track.

Now a majority, 55 percent, believe the country is headed in the right direction. It is back on the right track. That is a dramatic turn rather quickly, but I think it is, in part, because of the good work we have done here in the Senate.

Now we have learned something else: Consumer confidence has increased faster after the passage of the American Rescue Plan than after any of the other stimulus bills passed by Congress, particularly among low- and middle-income Americans, who have suffered the most.

That is fantastic news. Americans at the top have been able to survive the pandemic much more easily than Americans at the lower end of the ladder. For that reason, economists have long feared a K-shaped recovery in which high-income earners recover quickly, while middle- and low-income earners are left behind.

The American Rescue Plan is finally restoring confidence and support for Americans at the middle and at the bottom, helping drive a robust recovery for everyone.

One crucial aspect of that recovery is support for housing. As we all know, during the pandemic, tens of millions of Americans were out of work and drained family incomes. Americans were forced into impossible choices: Do I pay the rent and utilities this month or do I buy another few weeks of groceries?

Sadly, more than 13 million Americans report that they have fallen behind on the rent, especially Black and Brown Americans.

So when Senate Democrats put together the American Rescue Plan, we made one of the most significant investments in housing assistance in recent history: more than $20 billion in emergency aid for low-income renters, those at the greatest risk of eviction; $10 billion to help homeowners behind on mortgages and utilities to avoid foreclosure.

We include crucial support for rural America, homeowners struggling with the mortgage, and Americans, particularly veterans, who have recently fallen into homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

The American Rescue Plan goes further in delivering housing assistance to Tribal Nations and Native Hawaiians, more than any other housing bill in history.

The American Rescue Plan, quite literally, will keep a roof over Americans' heads. It is just one of the many ways the ARP delivers relief to struggling Americans and sets the stage for a supercharged economic recovery.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Yesterday, Secretary Mayorkas testified the ''border is secure and the border is not open.''

Yet the situation on our southern border has required FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to be called in. So either this is the first time FEMA has been deployed just to admire a situation that is going smoothly or the administration is not being straight with the American people.