

Speaker NANCY PELOSI proposes to write. I can assure you that it would look different and that we would have less domestic spending. But the fact of life is that MITCH MCCONNELL, the Republican leader, is the one who guides legislation here in the Senate, and NANCY PELOSI, a Democrat from California, is the one who guides legislation on the floor of the House of Representatives, and if we get a bill passed, we are going to have to get a compromise bill passed. If anybody within the sound of my voice doesn't realize this, they don't understand government. They don't understand the dynamics that have taken place since Philadelphia in 1776 and Philadelphia again in 1787, where give-and-take had to occur, but we moved things along for the greater good.

We can come to an agreement, or we can show ourselves to Vladimir Putin's Russia as unable to govern adequately, and we can show ourselves to Xi Jinping's China as unable to make the tough decisions to protect Americans. We have that choice, and we have a willingness on this side of the aisle and on the other side of the aisle. I was with some of my Democratic and Republican friends from the other body just yesterday. I think there is the willingness there. We are going to have to have an agreement that the administration will sign on to because the President's signature has to be affixed to this.

Now is the time—July 11, 2019—to get this decision made, before we leave for August. I would hope we wouldn't leave for August until we get that number agreed to. We come back after Labor Day, and then it is brinksmanship, and then suddenly it is shutdown city, and that is being threatened. Russia knows this, the Iranian leadership knows this, and China knows this. Let's do it now.

So I call on the Democratic and Republican leadership in the House, I call on our leadership, and I call on our President to get down to business in the next few days. Let's go ahead and make this decision that we know will eventually have to be made, make a responsible decision and send a message to the rest of the world that we intend to take care of our security.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, first of all, let me say that I couldn't agree more with the Senator from Mississippi, Mr. WICKER, than I do. His points are exactly right. A democracy is finding a way forward. It is not finding your way forward necessarily. It is obviously finding as much of your way forward as you can find. But it is finding a way forward.

Clearly, a top priority of the Federal Government is to defend the country. It is my top priority. I think I would be safe in suggesting it is Senator WICKER's top priority. And it is an important priority for our friends on the other side, but it may not be quite the same priority on the other side.

For this to work, the House and the Senate have to work together and the White House has to work together to come up with just that spending number. Once we have the number that we are going to spend, having the debate on the floor is suddenly possible.

I am fully in agreement with that, but I want to talk for a few minutes today about a program that we need to extend for a short period of time to get it extended to the end of this spending year.

MENTAL HEALTH

Madam President, I know the minority leader, the Democratic leader, just arrived, and he has heard a lot about this program from my friend Senator STABENOW. The excellence in mental health program—something we started 2 years ago. We passed legislation in 2014. We have come to the end of the first 2 years of that trial program. I want to talk more about why we need a longer term expansion of that trial, but first of all, we need to get a 3-month extension to get us to the end of this spending year.

I am always glad to talk about this program because what it does is it really begins to close the gap between how we talk about physical health and how we talk about mental health. Somewhere between one in four and one in five adult Americans, according to the National Institutes of Health, has a mental health problem that is diagnosable and almost always treatable, but less than half of the people who have that problem actually receive the care they need. These are people who are our neighbors, our family members, and our colleagues.

There is no stigma to seeking care, and society needs to do a better job—as I believe this program is helping us to do—talking about mental health like all other health.

On the last day of October 2013, on the 50th anniversary of the Community Mental Health Act, which was the last bill President Kennedy signed into law in 1963, Senator STABENOW and I came to the floor to talk about that 1963 bill and how many things have been closed down because of that bill and how many things have not been opened to replace them when that happened.

In the decades that followed, about half of the proposed community health centers that bill anticipated just simply were never built, and the facilities used for people who had substantial mental health challenges were closed.

What really happened over these 50 years is that the emergency room and local law enforcement became the de facto mental health system for the country, and nobody has been well served by that, including law enforcement, emergency rooms, and most importantly, people with mental health challenges and their families.

The Excellence in Mental Health Act was signed into law in 2014 to try to begin to address that problem. What the bill did was it created a 2-year, eight-State pilot program that would

provide mental health care at locations that met the standards, just like any other help would be provided. These would be certified community behavioral health clinics that would have, among other things, 24/7 crisis services available, outpatient mental health and substance abuse treatment, immediate screenings, risk assessments, and diagnoses available, and care coordination, including partnerships with emergency rooms, the law enforcement community, and veterans groups. All of that would have to be done in order to be part of that eight-State pilot. Twenty-four States initially applied. Nineteen States went through the entire process. Eight States were chosen, including Missouri.

Among other things, our State participated in the Emergency Room Enhancement Project. This is a project that is designed to identify people who present themselves at the emergency room as people who really need treatment for addiction issues and mental health issues, not other health issues, and then get them to a place where that treatment is going to be much more appropriate than it is likely to be at the emergency room.

In just 6 months of working with the emergency room, law enforcement, and mental health services in our State, we think there has been a reduction in homelessness of people who came to the emergency room of about 72 percent and a reduction in emergency room visits of 72 percent. Unemployment was reduced by 14 percent among the people who have gone to the emergency room with a mental health concern, and law enforcement contact was reduced by 59 percent.

So we have 2 years of study that indicates where we have gotten in our State, and I think other States are seeing similar kinds of numbers. I have been to clinics all over our State and have talked with those who have dealt with this. I talked particularly with law enforcement people all over our State, who have seen the change in the people they are dealing with and the options they have available. Suddenly, the option is not just to go to somebody's house at a crisis moment in the middle of the night and be taken to the emergency room for one night to have that problem solved; the option is actually to go somewhere where your mental health challenge is being dealt with, just like if you had a heart attack or a kidney problem or some other problem.

That is why we have introduced legislation to extend this for another 2 years and, if money is available in the pay-for we have proposed, to see whether we can add more States to the program.

When we announced this new legislation, Laura Heebner, who is with Compass Health systems in Missouri, was one of the people who joined us. She said that in the past, before this program was able to help in our State, roughly half of the people who sought an appointment from their mental

health facility could not get scheduled for several days, sometimes several weeks, and half of the people didn't come back. If a person shows up that one time and says "I am here because I have a real problem and I need help" and the answer is "We are not going to help you today; we are not going to do an evaluation right now," more often than not or as often as not, they don't come back. So at Compass Health, as well as many of our other certified clinics in our State, we increased access. We established same day walk-ins to attempt to look at their problem and see if they needed help that day or could, in fact, come back a few days later for an extensive visit. At that facility and others, everybody is being seen when they come in. The suicide care path they established has reduced suicides by 70 percent since last year.

I will make two quick points as I conclude.

No. 1, the goal of this program is not for the Federal Government to take over the behavioral health costs of the country; the goal of this program is to look at mental health and keep track of 24 or 25 other healthcare markers and decide how much other healthcare is impacted in a positive and, in fact, a cost-saving way if you are dealing with mental health at the same time.

The second point I would make is that we need to see Congress step up in the next few days and extend the current program through the end of this spending year, and then let's have a debate about why 2 more years of putting all that information together gives States and communities the information they need to find out. As a result, I believe everybody will understand that it is not only the right thing to do, but fiscally it is the smart thing to do. By dealing with mental health like all other health, the overall healthcare cost of that big mental health community goes down dramatically if you are seeing your doctor, showing up for your appointments, and taking your medicine. Our other problems are much more easily managed when adding the cost of mental healthcare to all our other healthcare priorities. It isn't just the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do.

Hopefully the Congress will deal with that and the Senate can take a leadership role in dealing with that. The House has already sent us a bill. We need to respond to that by doing the two things I just mentioned. Let's treat mental health like we treat all other health.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, let me thank my friend from Missouri for what he and Senator STABENOW are trying to do on mental health. I know some States were included and other States were not, so I support that aspect of what he was talking about.

2020 CENSUS

Madam President, later today, President Trump will give a news conference in the Rose Garden about his attempts to create an Executive order to add citizenship questions to the 2020 census. That is outrageous. It is outrageous substantively, and it is outrageous because this President has so little respect for the rule of law. He thinks he can just issue Executive orders and go around the Congress, go around established law, and try to bully the courts. I believe he will be thwarted by the courts, and this will be a real test of John Roberts and the Supreme Court, whether they stand for the rule of law or are always looking for an excuse to move the country rightward. We will see.

Today, the Trump administration has provided no legitimate legal rationale for adding this question to the census. Just yesterday, the New York Times reported that Justice Department lawyers "resigned from the lawsuit out of ethical concerns and a belief that the suit was unwinnable."

Well, we all know what is going on. The Trump administration doesn't have a legitimate legal rationale. The true motivation was even clear before the papers of that deceased designer of this question came to light. The true rationale is blatantly political and self-serving. President Trump wants to include the citizenship question to intimidate minorities—particularly Latinos—from answering the census so that it undercuts those communities and Republicans can redraw congressional districts to their advantage.

The Census Bureau itself determined weeks ago that including such a question would result in a significant undercount. That alone is enough for disqualification. That is not what the Constitution says—manipulate the census so you don't get an accurate count. The President knows this. Yet he continues to pursue a cynical idea—typical of the President—cynical and against minorities, with no respect for the rule of law, mores, and values that made this country great. Day by day, he destroys them. Day by day.

The President's action is nothing more than a naked political power grab, which is one of the few things he is good at as President. It shows once again just how little respect the President has for our democracy. It is also one prong in the Trump administration's multifaceted attack on communities of color. They are doing another one today in addition to this, which I will speak about in a minute.

Let's not forget that the census is a constitutional mandate. It has been conducted impartially by Democratic and Republican administrations alike since 1790. It should be beyond the reach of partisan politics. But this President has such disdain for constitutional law norms and the rule of law that he will try anything to set the rules to his advantage, even if it means circumventing Congress and circum-

venting the courts. This is what dictators do in banana republics. They try to change the rules to consolidate political power no matter what their constitutions and rule of law say. The President is moving us in that direction, and our Republican colleagues are supine. They say nothing. Many of them know what he is doing is wrong, and knees clatter because they are too afraid to tell the President he is wrong.

The American people should be outraged about this. Republican Senators should be outraged about this, but, like so many other instances in which the President subverts our Democratic norms, the silence from Republicans in Congress has been deafening and degrading to the very fabric of this wonderful democracy that the President day by day tries—usually unsuccessfully, thank God—to undo.

IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT

Madam President, on the ICE raids, last night the New York Times reported another thing President Trump was trying to do—ordering ICE to resume plans to carry out nasty deportation raids over the weekend. His plan will tear families apart and disrupt immigrant communities across America, including immigrants here legally and those in the process of legally applying for asylum. Cruelty. Cruelty seems to be the point of these raids. This is not an effort to root out dangerous individuals. This is an act of brutish force designed to spread fear in the immigrant community. Steve Miller whispers in the President's ear: Treat them cruelly. Make them afraid, and maybe they will not come.

They are going to come. The dangers in their home countries are much worse. What would any citizen do in America or any other place in the world if a gang came to you and said: I am going to rape your daughter unless you do what I want; I am going to kill your son; I am going to burn your House—you would flee.

These are not criminals. They are people trying to preserve their families, their children, their lives. Yet the President—egged on by some of the rightwing news media—tries to make Americans believe they are all criminals. Sure, if one of these folks is a bank robber or a burglar or hurts somebody, they should be out—one, two, three.

If they are simply trying to escape brutality, we still should have rule of law, but they should be treated with some decency, honor, and humanity. That has been the American tradition for some 200-odd years.

The President's policy is not only cruel—that is the worst of it—but it is brainless. When it comes to intelligently using our immigration resources, the administration should focus on the small minority that are actually criminals, not families and not 10-year-olds.