

the person who bought the lemon to be forced to sue the bank instead of the car dealer. You can't have it both ways.

It is not just me who believes that the DeVos rule is bad for student borrowers. A number of student, consumer, veteran, and other organizations are supporting this resolution to overturn the rule: the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, the NAACP, Third Way, Bipartisan Policy Center Action, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and 20 different State attorneys general. But the groups I want to highlight as I close in these final 2 or 3 minutes are the veterans organizations.

Many of the students who have been defrauded are veterans. These men and women have served our country in uniform, and after serving they seek an education to provide a better life for themselves and their families, and they deserve it. We have story after story after story of veterans who signed up at these for-profit colleges. They were told the GI education benefits were all they needed, only to waste the entire benefits on a worthless degree and be forced to take tens of thousands of dollars of student debt on top of it.

That is why our effort in this vote in just 2 minutes on the floor of the Senate—our effort to overturn this rule—is supported by the American Legion, the Student Veterans of America, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the National Military Families Association, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, VetsFirst, Veterans for Common Sense, and Veterans Education Success.

James "Bill" Oxford is the national commander of the American Legion, and he wrote to me and said: "Thousands of student veterans have been defrauded over the years—promised their credits would transfer when they wouldn't, given false or misleading job placement rates in marketing, promised one educational experience . . . but given something completely different."

He, the American Legion commander, calls the DeVos rule "fundamentally rigged against defrauded borrowers" and says that it "flagrantly denies defrauded veterans [fair and timely] decisions [on their claims]."

How many speeches do each of us give as Senators about how much we value our military and veterans? We have a chance to prove it in just 1 minute, because there will be a roll call. Are you going to stand up for these veterans and these students and are you going to say to Secretary DeVos you are headed the wrong way?

These students and these veterans have been defrauded. Give them a fighting chance to rebuild their lives. Don't make it next to impossible.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all time is expired.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RELATING TO BORROWER DEFENSE INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to the Congressional Review Act, the clerk will report H.J. Res. 76.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 76) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to "Borrower Defense Institutional Accountability".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the joint resolution a third time.

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

(Mr. LANKFORD assumed the Chair.)

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROMNEY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 70 Leg.]

#### YEAS—53

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Portman
Bennet	Harris	Reed
Blumenthal	Hassan	Rosen
Booker	Hawley	Schatz
Brown	Heinrich	Schumer
Cantwell	Hirono	Shaheen
Capito	Jones	Sinema
Cardin	Kaine	Smith
Carper	King	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Sullivan
Collins	Manchin	Tester
Coons	Markey	Udall
Cortez Masto	McSally	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murkowski	Wyden
Feinstein	Murray	Young
Gardner	Peters	

#### NAYS—42

Alexander	Fischer	Perdue
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blackburn	Grassley	Roberts
Blunt	Hoeben	Romney
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Braun	Inhofe	Rubio
Burr	Johnson	Sasse
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lee	Shelby
Cramer	Loeffler	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Tillis
Daines	Moran	Toomey
Enzi	Paul	Wicker

#### NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	Murphy	Warren
Klobuchar	Sanders	

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 76) passed.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT

##### AGREEMENT—S.J. Res. 56

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Calendar No. 439, S.J. Res. 56, be indefinitely postponed.

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

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, over the last several weeks, the world has watched closely as the coronavirus has spread from China to more than 100 countries around the world.

Since this rapid spread began—before cases were discovered in at least 35 States, including the District of Columbia—folks in my hometown of San Antonio were already providing top-notch care for Americans evacuated from Wuhan Province overseas with suspected exposure.

From the first evacuees from China to more than 120 passengers from the Diamond Princess cruise ship, to those who will soon arrive from the Grand Princess cruise ship, the dedicated healthcare professionals in San Antonio have been operating—have been hitting on all cylinders.

So far, Lackland Air Force Base has been used to quarantine 235 evacuees, with hundreds more to arrive in the coming days. I must say, they have done a good job of managing this rapidly evolving situation, but that is not to say there haven't been challenges.

A few weeks ago, I organized a meeting with officials from the city of San Antonio, including the mayor and two city council persons, as well as the Department of Health and Human Services and the Defense Department, to discuss the ongoing mission and any concerns the city might have. Anytime officials at every level of government

are working together—whether it is in response to a natural disaster or a public health emergency—coordination is key. You have to make sure everybody is operating on the same page and regularly sharing information—something that was a challenge in the beginning and remains a challenge today.

At one point, we were able to get everybody in the same room to discuss not only the response to the virus but the steps to be taken to protect the general public in the surrounding area. Of course, that work doesn't start and end at Lackland in San Antonio. Hospitals around the State are facing a great deal of pressure and uncertainty surrounding the virus and working to ensure that they are prepared to treat potential coronavirus patients without impacting their normal operations is an urgent concern.

Last week, I helped organize a conference call with the Texas Hospital Association and officials from Health and Human Services and the Texas Department of State Health Services to discuss some of the issues of concern to hospitals serving on the frontline all across our State. There have been a lot of news stories about the shortage of masks and personal protective equipment for healthcare workers and subsequent price gouging, and that is a big concern for these hospitals—many of which serve rural populations. As I told folks on that call, communication in these situations is critical. It seems so obvious, but it is not done unless you insist upon it. I was particularly glad to hear personally their concerns so we can make sure we are doing what is needed on our end in Washington, DC, to support them.

I appreciate Texas's incredible healthcare professionals who have been working to treat patients in their care and prevent the coronavirus from spreading to the general public. The city of San Antonio—I have to single out in particular—has been carrying the weight of the struggle for a number of weeks now, and it has come at quite a significant cost to city taxpayers. Fortunately, last week, the President signed an \$8.3 billion funding bill to support our Nation's response to the coronavirus. It will send vital funding for treating and preventing the spread of the virus, including the purchase of masks and personal protective equipment, as well as supporting the development of a vaccine.

The funding bill will also include money for State and local communities, including San Antonio, which have been at the forefront of the battle at home. That makes \$950 million available for reimbursement for the costs Texas and other States have incurred while monitoring and treating these individuals. It is a start in the process to repay San Antonio for the work they have done to help our Nation mitigate the impact of the coronavirus.

I appreciate Chairman SHELBY and Ranking Member LEAHY for including

this reimbursement funding in the legislation and working so closely with all of us to get the relief on the way as soon as possible.

Over the last couple of days, we have witnessed the ripple effect the coronavirus threat has had on the markets, and the next big question on everyone's mind is how this virus will impact the economy. Yesterday we had the opportunity to discuss potential options with President Trump, Vice President PENCE, and Secretary Mnuchin, and we are continuing to work to identify the best path forward.

Unfortunately, there doesn't yet seem to be a bipartisan effort to try to reach a consensus—something we need. One of our Democratic colleagues suggested that the best way to prevent economic damage is to stop the spread of the virus. I can't argue with that logic, but unless that Senator knows something the rest of us don't know, that is not exactly a productive use of our time. We know we need to stop the virus, but we also need to deal with the economic fallout as well.

When we were in a position in 2014 with the Ebola crisis, we didn't hear a lot of griping about what President Obama was doing. We found ways to work with him for the betterment of our communities in the country. So I hope that at a time when we are confronting this threat, we can work together. That includes the Speaker and the minority leader here, all of us together to try to solve this problem. It is not a time to play politics. It is a time for us to work together in the Nation's interest.

Keeping the American people safe and healthy and keeping our economy strong should be a shared bipartisan goal. I hope our colleagues—all of our colleagues—will keep that in mind, just as we did when we worked with President Obama in 2014.

While the American people are rightly taking precautions to protect themselves and their loved ones, it is important to remember there is no reason to panic. Preparation, yes; panic, no.

The leaders at the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Health and Human Services continue to remind all of us that the risk for the average American remains low, and the best defense against the virus is to use the same personal hygiene practices that our mother taught us when we were young. To help communicate what those practices are, as well as other information, my office has created a unique web page on my official website, [cornyn.senate.gov](http://cornyn.senate.gov). This will serve as a platform to provide information to all Texans who have questions about the virus and may be of interest to anybody who is concerned about what the government is doing to deal with the virus. If you are looking for information on how to prevent the spread of the virus, what Congress is doing to help, where you can find the latest number of cases in Texas, we have compiled all of the relevant links in one place.

I know I speak on behalf of all Texans when I thank the dedicated healthcare professionals around the State and around the Nation for providing the highest quality care for people who come down with the virus. I am grateful for everyone who is unified in this fight and who are working to stop the spread of the virus and, ultimately, develop a vaccine.

On one final note, let me say a word about my friend and colleague Senator CRUZ. Over the weekend, he announced he would self-quarantine after coming into contact with someone who was later determined to have the coronavirus. I want to thank him for having the courage to step forward and to do what any one of us should do if we are exposed to somebody with the coronavirus, if we know it: to monitor our health and make sure we don't spread it to others and to seek care from a healthcare professional should we begin to come down with worrisome symptoms.

His is a great reminder for all Americans to take this potential risk seriously and that we should all be joined together to do everything we can to keep our communities safe and healthy.

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

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

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of my friend from Texas. I only heard part of them, but I appreciate his interest and what we need to do to deal with this coronavirus. I hear so often in this body that it is about the economic issues, which to be sure it is, as you know in Utah and Senator CORNYN knows. But when I hear the President's response on what to do—first, I know that people are angry in Ohio and I think elsewhere that the President has waited so long to act.

I know people are angry when they find out that the President made major cuts to the Centers for Disease Control, which the Presiding Officer knows is the best public health agency probably in the history of the world, combined with our public health departments at NIH and the FDA and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in Cincinnati—all of this incredible public health infrastructure safety net we have built in this country bipartisanly through decades and decades and decades.

I know people are unhappy when they learn about the President eliminating the position at the White House of the admiral physician who ran our effort to always be trying to anticipate a public health outbreak, a pandemic of sorts. I

don't know whether or not we are in one. I don't think we know that.

I am not an alarmist or panicky in any way, but I know people realize we had such a late start on this because of the President's actions over the last 3 years.

The issue is not to bail out more corporations. The issue is not to give money to the cruise ship companies, for gosh sakes, which is one part of the President's rhetoric tweet proposals. The cruise ship industry is almost exclusively foreign-owned. Why take tax dollars and shovel them into the cruise industry?

Instead of focusing on large corporations, which is something the President always does—I understand that is what he comes from, who he is, and who his supporters are—instead of focusing there, we should be focusing on individuals, and that means starting with a sick leave policy and sick days.

Think about how hard it is for all of us in this body—think about somebody making \$12 an hour and living alone or living with a child or living with a spouse, whoever, making \$12 an hour with no benefits and they get sick. They think, let's see, do I go to work—if I go to work sick, I may get worse, and I may infect my colleagues and other employees—or do I stay home and give up that \$100 of a \$12-an-hour job? I am paying \$700 a month in rent. Can I give up that \$100 or \$200 or \$300 over 2 or 3 days?

There are so many Americans who are sick who wrestle with that decision every single day. This is an opportunity. Senator MURRAY worked on a bill. I worked on this bill with her for a good while. I just spoke with Congresswoman DELAURO from Connecticut about working on legislation to provide emergency relief right now. We can do this today. I know the Presiding Officer has been open-minded about things like this. We can make this bipartisan. We can have immediate 14-day help as part of our package that we already voted on and then have a long-term, 7-day sick day policy where you earn those benefits. As you work, you earn that—up to 7-day sick day policy. Every other industrialized, wealthy country in the world has it. It makes safer, healthier workplaces and safer, healthier workers. It will mean good help and stronger families—all the kinds of things a sick day policy would mean to our country.

I am hopeful that rather than shovel money to corporations, we will spend that money on individuals, on people, on workers and their workplace. It could make all the difference in the world, not just in addressing this coronavirus public health crisis today but in preventing these kinds of crises in the future.

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

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for me, Senator COLLINS, and Senator CASSIDY to have a colloquy.

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

#### PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, as most of my colleagues know, I hold a meeting in each of Iowa's 99 counties every year for Q&A with my constituents. Over the last couple of years, without fail, Iowans have brought up the skyrocketing prices of prescription drugs. People all over my State, including farmers, factory workers, and especially senior citizens, have raised the concern that pharmacy bills have been ballooning.

I will say, Iowans are always interested in hearing about solutions, and they are looking for solutions on this issue from Congress, but not a single one of these people who bring this issue up cares about the partisan politics of the issue. Iowans just want Congress to act. This is my 40th year of taking questions in our 99 counties—although, as of now, only 14. Rarely have I heard so much unanimity when it comes to this issue, but on prescription drug prices, it is unanimous. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike all want us to take action, and the data, both polling and otherwise, bears out our constituents' concerns.

As I highlighted last week, right here in this position on the Senate floor, a new study shows that pharmaceutical prices have increased 3½ times the rate of inflation in recent years. People are paying more than double what they paid in the year 2007 for drugs treating conditions from MS to diabetes and everything in between. The lack of transparency and the enormous subsidy incentives are driving these price hikes—perverse incentives that we have in law. If they were not intended to be perverse, they are incentives people have found out how to benefit from.

This is because the government's spigot is all the way open for the big pharmaceutical companies or—how we say it around here—Big Pharma. Of course, when this happens, taxpayers get ripped off. It happens because we pay a lot of money—I think about \$138 billion—for Medicare and Medicaid. We pay at least that much. So, when you have 5- to 10-percent increases on January 1, you can see willy-nilly, on the judgment of Big Pharma, that taxpayers are paying a heck of a lot more.

I know all of my colleagues want to do something about this, and I know the administration wants to do something about it. In fact, let me say to the administration that I have been involved in this as the chairman of this committee since just a year ago Janu-

ary. The administration has given a major speech, and the Secretary of HHS has taken major action going way back to June of 2018. So we all know that our colleagues and our administration know that something needs to be done.

We are fortunate that, just yesterday, the White House published five principles that the administration can get behind for reducing prescription drug costs. Our legislation in the Senate fits the bill, or the principles, that were laid out in that op-ed piece. The Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act is the name of our legislation, and it addresses those principles. More importantly, it is the only option that can get 60 votes in the U.S. Senate.

Many Americans are reading about the coronavirus issue. It scares our constituents. We don't know what kind of drugs might come into the market to help treat the disease. Senator CASSIDY, who will soon speak, is an expert on that. He can address those issues for anybody who wants them addressed. Yet, if our bill becomes law, we know that folks who are on Medicare will not face sticker shock at the drugstore counter. Not only is that important in its being a comforting thought in the short term, as we face the coronavirus, but it is important in the long term, when we inevitably encounter another novel outbreak.

It took a long time to hammer out the Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act. I thank Senator WYDEN for sticking it out with me and working in good faith for the benefit of all of our constituents so we could produce a bipartisan bill. His determination as well as the leadership of many of my colleagues, like Senators CASSIDY, COLLINS, and DAINES, have further improved the legislation. We have a bill. We have bipartisan support, and we have White House support. We also have the opportunity. The bottom line is, let's act.

I thank my colleagues for joining me in this effort.

I yield to my colleague Senator COLLINS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, first, I express my appreciation to the chairman of the Committee on Finance, Senator GRASSLEY, not only for his leadership but also for his persistence on an issue that affects so many Americans, and that is the soaring price of prescription drugs.

Three committees—the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, and the Committee on the Judiciary—have all advanced bipartisan legislation to reform our broken drug pricing system.

The Aging Committee, which I chair, has held eight drug pricing hearings which have highlighted the burden of soaring prices and the manipulation of the market by individuals like the infamous Martin Shkreli. It is now past time for us to move forward to the Senate floor to debate these bills that have