

The story is similar in Portland, where Betsy and Iya, a company that has designed and manufactured jewelry for the past 12 years and regularly employs about 17 workers, had to downsize. They had to ask three of their workers to be let go.

This is a business that has gone out of its way to promote other local businesses, but sales have dropped off very quickly. I would presume that in this sense of crisis, families are buying essentials, and that means those in the jewelry industry are seeing their sales drop. The sales have dropped very quickly, and they are seeing the virus's huge economic impacts, and they are expecting to have to lay off more people soon, and they are looking for help.

Ultrazone Laser Tag—now, you might think that, with folks being out of work, they might go to a place to get some exercise and have some recreation, and a sense of separation might be OK. Maybe laser tag would see an upsurge in sales—not the case. Lee Sturman, of Ultrazone Laser Tag, in Milwaukie says:

My name is Lee Sturman, and I am the owner of Ultrazone Laser Tag, a family entertainment center located in Milwaukie, Oregon. As the founder, I have successfully operated for 26 years. During this time, like all small business owners, I have battled competitors and overcome other challenging obstacles. On a level playing field, I have managed to survive and thrive. But, unfortunately, my business has been upended by an invasion of tiny microbes. COVID-19 has struck fast and struck hard. In a matter of two weeks, Ultrazone has gone from busy crowds to near emptiness.

Steve and Kristi Ball operate Basin Indoor Gardening in Klamath Falls, OR. In response to the Klamath County Chamber of Commerce collecting stories of the financial impact that COVID-19 is having on local businesses, they submitted the following and appreciate the opportunity to share, and I appreciate the fact that they responded and are sharing. Steve and Kristi note:

[They have] owned a small retail business in downtown Klamath Falls for nearly 11 years so have experience with seasonal fluctuations and customer trends that affect the cash flow and overall revenues of my store. Things have been shockingly slow since the beginning of March but especially this last week where customer traffic has almost halted. Based on last years total for March and daily sales compared to this years same time frame my store gross sales are down to about 36% of normal, indicating 64% loss in revenues. I hope this is a short lived situation and business can go back to what is normal, more than a month like this will force some difficult decisions for the future of my store.

April Severson of Portland writes:

I've owned my event production company for 20-years. My business has always had it's ups and downs but this is the first time I've had all of my contracts cancelled. I am the sole employee of my company however, my cancelled contracts have also cancelled the work for my associates and vendors in audio-visual, entertainment, decor, furniture rentals, floral and catering. Since most of my vendors are small and emerging businesses

as well this has had a spiraling effect on our ability to pay for bills, insurance, mortgages and to take care of our families.

Amy Baker is the owner of Thread Bare Press in Eugene, and she notes:

My screen printing business relies primarily on schools, restaurants and events to keep our T-shirt presses running. On Friday March 13th as the stock market tanked and major cultural centers shut down across the country, I saw a third of our monthly revenue vanish in one day. In the five days since, my email inbox has remained empty as our client base struggles to shore up their expenses. I have laid off half of my six staff this week and have let the rest know that next week they will temporarily not have a job. It's hard to feel like so many people depend on me for their paychecks, let alone my own children that depend on me for our own livelihood. I have helped my staff apply for unemployment, but there is no unemployment for business owners. We are a small business that essentially lives week to week based on our clients. In a perfect world there would be money to pay my staff paid leave or savings to sustain myself while we close our doors for what I estimate to be a month. However, we are not in that position. What I'm hoping for is to ride out this storm with forgiveness on my own bills and expenses that will not get paid next month. I'll need emergency, low interest capital to get back to work and bring my staff back on.

Then we have all of our State's music venues, like Mississippi Studios and the historic Liberty Theater in Astoria and the Ashland Shakespeare Festival in Ashland. All of them are in danger of going out of business. With social distancing and prohibitions on large gatherings and a sudden cancellation of musical acts, the venues are experiencing a sudden and total loss of income.

Those stories are representative of things happening all over my State and I know in every State of the United States of America. The economy is imploding, and with each and every small business that can't pay its bills, it affects other small businesses and other larger businesses. It affects those who have rental housing and those who have mortgages. All of us are going to be touched.

That is why it is going to be so important that we turn to this third stage of response by the U.S. Senate. The first stage was to shore up the healthcare industry. The second stage was some immediate help with sick leave and unemployment insurance and food assistance and free testing for the coronavirus. That bill inexplicably has been sitting untended in this Chamber. Why aren't all 100 of us here debating it before the American people and voting on it?

I am told now that maybe, possibly, the bill may come to the floor this afternoon; that some deal will be worked out. Wouldn't it be better that we actually be on the floor talking about it, discussing it, and voting on amendments, if necessary? In a perfect world, I would like to pass it just the way the House sent it to us and get it into law immediately. The President has signed on, the House has signed on. You have Republican leadership and

Democratic leadership. Why is this Chamber not acting?

Then we must immediately go to this broader strategy—the stimulus to support our economy through this collapse to try to keep the collapse from being as severe and shortening the period before it can be restored. That period is going to depend a lot on how successful we are at interrupting the course of this disease. That is why this is so important—social distancing is so important. We have to stop the disease from moving from one person to another. The disease is on the march against America, and we have to interrupt it. We have to bring it to a standstill.

Meanwhile, we have to help those families and businesses being so profoundly affected across America. Let's rebuild this economy from the bottom up, paying attention to the impact on families and the impact on our small businesses. As John F. Kennedy once put it, "In a time of domestic crisis, men of goodwill and generosity should be able to unite regardless of party or politics." That is what we did after 9/11. That is exactly what must happen today.

Let us not be moved by the powerful and the wealthy to give yet more wealth and power to them. Let us be moved by the fact that we are all Americans in this together. Let us tend to the fundamental needs of healthcare and housing and education and, most importantly, good jobs as those jobs disappear across America.

Let's pay attention and work together to shore up small businesses with low-interest loans and with grants to see them and their employees through this difficult time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, thank you. I want to thank my colleague from Oregon for his big heart and his compassion, continually always worrying about those being left behind and forgotten. I can assure you that Mr. MERKLEY does not leave anybody behind, and he never forgets those who are in need of help.

Let me just say, in speaking about what we are dealing with, unlike anything we have ever seen in my lifetime and most people's lifetimes, up until a couple days ago, my State of West Virginia felt like we were immune. There were no cases reported, and we were like an island in a sea of infestation around us. I knew that was not the case. Many people did not know that we were just not testing and the amount of tests were just not out there, so people had a false sense of hope and security.

That has been shattered. We have our first case now. I am praying to the good Lord we don't have many more, but I suspect because of the fragility of our citizens and the elderly population that we have, those who have done

hard work all their lives and have respiratory ailments could be in jeopardy. We are very concerned about that.

I was reluctant to come and speak, but I think there are some things that need to be said. We are moving in an unprecedented way to how much money should be thrown at a pandemic and how much money do they believe it will take to get us through this horrible time. First of all, we should be thinking about are we investing and trying to build our healthcare defense system back up? It has been basically decimated over the last 2 or 3 years. Should we not put the scientists and people who know back in positions where they can be looking at these horrible illnesses and diseases, pandemics, and viruses that we have coming from different parts of the world to protect us from them hitting our country again like this?

Next of all, should we not be putting everything we have into our research capabilities and working with all the scientists in all the different centers so that we can find a way to treat this virus with a vaccine that would prevent people from contracting this virus? Those are the measures we should be totally and absolutely committed to and spending our time and effort immediately upon.

Next of all, the financial help that we are going to need. First of all, don't you think we should be using this—through every challenge that we have ever had in this great country, we have found a way to come out of it bigger and stronger. Don't you think we should be manufacturing the medical devices that we need to heal and cure and take care of American citizens right here in the good old USA? Don't you think we should have the amount of products it takes to make the pharmaceutical pills that we need in order to keep us healthy or cure us, if you will? Don't you think some of that should be done in the USA that we have allowed to leave our shores and which now we find is desperately needed? Don't you think we should be making the medical masks to protect our first responders and all of our medical workers whom we need to have on the job? Those are the things we are worried about from the fallout that can come from this horrific pandemic. It gives us a chance to reconnect and also a way to correct the lackadaisical approach we have had to manufacturing over the years. This is a time for change.

Let me throw something else out. I don't think that you and I need a \$1,000 check. I don't think we need that. I think there are an awful lot of people in America who still have a job, even if they are working from home, and that basically is not going to change their life with that \$1,000 check. Think about the people who truly do need that check and a lot more—people on the frontline who have no control of this whatsoever, that don't have a guaranteed source of income unless they are

out there earning it every day. Don't you think we could help them more through expanded unemployment benefits, working through the system that we already have in place in all of our States and in this country? Don't you think that might be a better way?

How about the small businesses that are not capitalized to the point that they have no ability whatsoever to continue to operate when there is no capital or cashflow or reserves to take care of themselves? Don't you think we can help them through the SBA by removing the restrictions and redtape we have? Unemployment benefits: Basically, waiving all the wait times, increasing that to a \$500-a-week limit? Things of that sort would help, don't you think?

The large corporations, which I know everyone is concerned about, got one tremendous tax break. That being said, they will come back. They can afford to pay back a loan at zero percent interest, if you will, helping in some way to keep that part of the economy stimulated but not to the point where we are putting our children and grandchildren into a debt that we can avoid—but not being compassionate and sympathetic toward those who really need it on the frontline, which is the average working person who gets up every day and finds out there is no work for them. They are already on unemployment. They are in the system. Also, the small businesses are struggling. They are there.

We are to the point now where we are going to bite off a lot more, and we are going to write checks that our children can't cash. That is exactly what we are doing, if we are not smart about this. It seems that everyone is gathering around now for whatever type of cover. I am not sitting here blaming the President or blaming any administration or anybody else for what we didn't do 2 or 3 or 4 months ago. I am asking now: Are we going to take responsibility for what we are about to do that doesn't make any sense whatsoever?

With that being said, let's make sure that the money we are putting in the system is fixing the medical end of it, finding a cure for this virus, making sure that other viruses or pandemics don't attack us. Let's make sure we are doing everything we can with what we are responsible for.

Every leader takes an oath of office. When you raise your hand, whether you are a mayor or Governor or President, whatever, you should be thinking immediately upon taking that oath, what can I do to protect the people I am responsible to represent? If you can't do that, then you are going into the wrong job with the wrong ideas, I can assure you of that.

I am saying that I have the most at-risk population in the country. It is an older population that has done heavy lifting and heavy jobs and basically has respiratory concerns and ailments. They are the most vulnerable, and this pandemic can take a horrific toll on

the population of the State of West Virginia if we are not careful with what we do.

We can also change the course of how we do business and how we look after each other in America. This situation is asking all of us and challenging every one of us to look to humanity with compassion and to bring us together as a people. The American people are a most generous, caring, and compassionate people. West Virginians treat everybody as their neighbors. That is who we are. We must take care of our neighbors and reach out and help those in need.

Right now, we have a situation where I am concerned. I am concerned that all of us have not done our job as well as we could have, and we are just throwing caution to the wind, thinking we can make everybody happy with this political coverage because we are going to be throwing money at everything, thinking this will take care of it. It will not. It will not unless we deal with the root problems we have. That means fixing our manufacturing base, taking care of Americans, making sure people who can't work and who have no other recourse, basically have no control of their destiny—basically provide the services. That means the jobs have to be there to meet the demand. We cut most of that out. Let's make sure we can take care of them and do that without bankrupting our future generations. I think it can be done.

I will say this. I spoke to Vice President MIKE PENCE last night and told him the dire need we were in. I said: Mr. Vice President, I know the people are thinking that West Virginia has been spared. We have not. We haven't been tested. We need more test kits. We need more protection for our first responders. We need respirators and ventilators. We need the tents and first-tier operations. We are not in a second tier. We are too vulnerable to be in that second tier. If you want to stop the carnage that could happen if this thing breaks loose in my State full-fledged, then please help us.

I want to thank the Vice President for basically reaching out and helping West Virginia. We are going to get through this. There will be a light at the end of the tunnel. There will be a new day. We will have a chance to right the problems we have right now that have been of our own making, and we can correct them by our own actions right now.

I want to thank you, Mr. President. I hope all our colleagues are working in a bipartisan way. We should be working together. There are few times this opportunity comes. In a political arena, there are two things that happen. You better never ever take advantage of a crisis, and make something better happen. That is what we are dealing with now.

It is a mandate. People are mandating us to do our job. They are mandating us to work together, not to be irresponsible or act like we are not in

touch with the average person. We are because that is whom we represent.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, shortly, the Senate will vote on the Paul amendment, and I want this body to understand why I strongly oppose it.

The Paul amendment, in its essence, has nothing to do with the underlying proposal responding to this enormous COVID-19 crisis. The Paul amendment is a poison pill that essentially focuses on an old political issue that this body has debated before and very likely is going to debate again. I just don't believe the Paul amendment has any place in a debate on an emergency coronavirus bill.

Every Member of this Senate understands our country is facing and dealing with a national health and economic crisis. The country wants us to focus like a laser on emergency measures that can help save lives and keep families from falling into destitution.

The Paul amendment says, in effect, that immigrant families with kids are going to pay for the emergency with their kids' well-being. These families, like so many others, are especially vulnerable at this moment. It is just wrong to bring misery into their homes.

I would just ask my colleagues to save the immigration debates for another time when we are not in the middle of a pandemic. Today, the focus is about that pandemic and acting in an emergency, where we come together, both political parties, both sides of the aisle. When you are dealing with this kind of pandemic, your focus is helping families and workers, small businesses, and all of those people who are walking on an economic tightrope. They are not getting paychecks, is what we are hearing, and they are trying to figure out how to pay the rent. If they pay the rent, do they have money for food? If they have money for food, what do they do about out-of-pocket healthcare? Folks want our support with those survival issues.

On the Finance Committee—I am very pleased to see the distinguished President of this body working with us on the Finance Committee. What we have tried to do is focus on modernizing unemployment insurance. I have said to my colleagues: Let's just face it—unemployment is a system that has been in a time warp.

I think we have a very important proposal that is going to help an enormous number of people from sea to shining sea. We need to do so much right now, particularly in terms of saving lives and getting healthcare to our people.

What I hear from home is people who are following this are saying: There is so much to do. Act now, then get on with the additional steps that have to

be taken. But for today, get on with this. Get on with passing this bill and getting ready to move to the next bill.

Those in need of healthcare and citizens struggling to make it through these unprecedented times want action now. They all realize that there will be several additional pieces of legislation—hopefully sooner rather than later—but our job today is to make sure we pass this bill.

I urge my colleagues, when we vote on the Paul amendment very shortly, to oppose it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I rise in support of my amendment to pay for this economic stimulus package by removing less important spending from elsewhere in the budget.

I would ask every American: If you were faced with a personal crisis and had to spend extra money and you had to spend extra money on food and medicine—money that you had to borrow from a relative—wouldn't you prioritize your resources and immediately stop loaning money to friends overseas for their children to go to, for example, space camp? Wouldn't you stop funding clown colleges in Argentina? If you had a true emergency like this pandemic, wouldn't you stop building roads and gas stations in Pakistan? If you had a true emergency like this corona pandemic, wouldn't you immediately stop spending money studying why drunk people fall down more than sober people?

I ask my colleagues to stop wasting money in this time of crisis. Stop being a rubberstamp for wasteful spending. Do your jobs and prioritize our precious resources. It is our job and our responsibility to conserve these resources.

Why is this important? Why shouldn't we just print or borrow the money instead of making cuts in things like foreign aid? Because next time, maybe in the not too distant future, our children may not even be able to borrow their way out of a crisis. Our dollar will be devalued, our economy ruined, and all because we will have been profligate fools with our resources; all because we refused to do what we were elected to do, which is to prioritize the truly vital, such as coronavirus relief and medical research, over the extraneous, such as spending money on clown colleges, gas stations, and roads in Afghanistan.

To my fellow Americans, remain hopeful, remain kind, remain faithful, and above all, remain resilient. In the world's history, pandemics are the norm, not the exception. It is only recently—in the modern era of antibiotics and vaccines—that pandemics have become less frequent.

Ever since vaccines eradicated polio and smallpox, modern man has become accustomed to the idea that life is relatively safe and that a long life is to be expected. Consequently, any re-erup-

tion of diseases beyond our control paralyzes us with fear.

People have forgotten what it is like to experience the annual dread of recurring infectious disease. My parents remember vividly the polio pandemics of the 1950s. In one of the last great outbreaks of polio, before the vaccine, almost 60,000 people contracted polio and over 3,100 died. Jonas Salk was greeted as a conquering hero for developing the first widespread polio vaccine, but that was nearly 70 years ago. In the early 18th century, Dr. Zabdiel Boylston showed great courage in introducing inoculation for smallpox. Within a generation, smallpox was on the wane and ultimately defeated when Edward Jenner discovered how to vaccinate using the milder cowpox.

This latest pandemic already has heroes—some known, but most of these heroes are unknown doctors and nurses on the frontlines. The innovators among us are already putting forth potential treatments and possible cures. A half dozen antiviral medications are in the final stages of study. Researchers believe that an old drug developed for malaria may help. Reports indicate that scientists will likely set a speed record in developing a vaccine.

Now is not the time for malaise; now is the time for optimism. By summer, there is a very good chance we will be in the recovery phase. Now is not the time to give in.

Several generations have grown up unfamiliar with the devastation of pandemics, and even now, when it is impossible to look the other way, the young and healthy rationalize their relative safety. Psychologically, it is easier for the young and healthy to view mortality as something that happens to the old and unhealthy. Coronavirus scares us because it kills not only the old and infirm but the young and vibrant, although much less frequently. One of the coronavirus's first victims was a 32-year-old, previously healthy ophthalmologist in Wuhan.

The question is not how serious is the pandemic or whether we should act but whether there is a plan of action that can preserve our economy and lead to a quick rebound.

I don't think anyone will ever know for certain whether grinding the U.S. economy to a halt was necessary. Likewise, no one can really know the converse—what would have happened had we not attempted to slow the virus's spread. It is useful, though, to remember that just 10 years ago, we suffered the swine flu pandemic, and the swine flu was no walk in the park. It is estimated that about 60 million Americans were infected and over 12,000 people died.

Now experts have said that the coronavirus is much more lethal than the swine flu—likely true—but worldwide deaths from the swine flu were estimated to be between 150,000 and 575,000. When calm returns, it will be helpful to examine how our responses