

fact—it is interesting—multiple other countries are also developing their own testing processes. In the days ahead, we will be able to catch up on the testing so that any American could be able to get testing, but for now, it is limited.

In States like my State of Oklahoma, where the virus is beginning its acceleration—we were late in actually getting the virus coming to Oklahoma, but now that the virus is there, it starts to accelerate, and testing is exceptionally important to us, as it is to everyone else.

The Department of Transportation is engaged on things like waivers for hours of service to allow the movement of goods all over the country dealing with livestock and with food.

There has been a big push from just about every retailer in the country to make sure they are cleaning facilities more and being open and accessible and having hours early in the morning for those in the most vulnerable populations so they are not shopping with people who may have the virus and don't even know it.

There has been a shift around the country to encourage people to telework or to find ways to separate in their place of work.

All of these things have occurred just in the last few months. Again, 3 months ago, none of us knew this term or this virus existed. All of this is happening extremely rapidly.

Three weeks ago, Congress and the President agreed on a proposal—it was a wide bipartisan proposal—to deal with additional funding for testing, additional funding for vaccine development, additional funding for State and local departments of health to make sure they are taking care of that. My own State of Oklahoma has already received almost \$7 million to help with what is happening in our county, and we are in desperate need of those dollars to get that done.

Vaccine development is already in human trials now. It is in phase 1. It will take multiple months to get that done, but we have already begun that process. That is important to us.

The bill that was on the floor today dealt with multiple helpful things. It expands SNAP—what some people still call food stamps, but it is supplemental nutrition. It is assistance for those families. It is an expansion of that.

It also deals with unemployment insurance benefits to make sure those are staying consistent and those get extended to people who are going to need them because in the past week, unemployment has dramatically increased all over the country. In the days ahead, when we see the numbers, we will see the difference between what is happening this week versus the week before versus the week before that.

The struggle is, my phones have been filled with one other element that is in that bill, and that deals with a mandate on small businesses for sick leave. Small businesses in my State are

closed. Many retailers and restaurants—many small businesses are really struggling with how they are going to pay for this when they have no income coming in right now. They are hearing the promise of a Federal reimbursement coming to them, but they don't know when that is coming, and they are literally teetering on the edge right now. Their struggle: Please don't do something that pushes us over the edge. We need help, but we don't need a bureaucracy that is going to be slow to respond or a way that is actually going to get us some help but help that comes to us too late.

I have heard these terrifying words from multiple employers: I cannot make it with that structure. I am going to have to lay people off and hope to be able to hire them back when this all ends.

For those families who are laid off and in unemployment now, this is a very different day for them. My fear is that some of what pushed some of those individuals over the edge into unemployment was a nudge to say we are going to add one more mandate to you at your worst possible economic moment.

The first principle we should have as Congress is, do no harm. We need to step in and help those folks who need help. There are lots of ideas being batted around by the Senate and the House, from both sides of the aisle, to figure out how we can get help as rapidly as we can to as many people as we can.

This is a moment unlike what we have seen before where it is not that the economy is crashing because of some economic foundation that is not there; it is fear and panic that is global, that literally we are struggling with “what if” and the CDC and our own governments saying to employers: It would be best if you closed for a season. And they, being good citizens and good neighbors, quite frankly, are complying with that out of fear for their own business and for their own employees.

I finished my day yesterday—late last night—talking to a small business owner in Oklahoma who related to me what he is going through right now and the struggles he is having keeping the doors open. Quite frankly, he was fairly blunt with me to say: The things that are being passed in the bill tomorrow will affect me, but my competitors that are big companies—it doesn't affect them. It is already hard enough for me as a small business to compete with them, and now I have a new mandate on me that is not a mandate on them, and it makes it even harder, and I don't think I will have the cash flow to be able to make this work.

Toward the end of the conversation, he paused and literally began to cry, and he pulled himself together and said: I am having to call people and tell them “I don't have hours for you next week,” and these are people I care about.

We need to take action, but we need to take action that helps people keep their jobs, helps people stay employed, and helps us deal with the dip in the economy right now to help them pull back out. My fear is that we didn't do that just now. We might have just made it worse.

There are important things for us to do, and many of those things we are working on this week. We have to get help to as many people as we can, as fast as we can. It is my hope that the Senate will continue to stay in session—as the leader has already said and promised that it would—until we actually come to some proposals where we have wide bipartisan agreement that can get help rapidly to the people who need the help the most: those workers, those individuals who are struggling, the folks who are hourly, those folks who are waiters and waitresses, those folks who work at the coffee shop and own the coffee shop, and those folks in retail locations that are shut down. They need us to stand with them, and this is our moment to do it. Let's do it together.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I want to start my remarks by saying to the people of Massachusetts and families all across the country: Many of you are making big sacrifices—quarantining yourselves, postponing or canceling major events, dealing with closed schools and daycare. We are grateful.

Right now, our primary goal needs to be to slow the spread of this virus, and we all share in that responsibility. So we thank you for everything you are doing to keep your loved ones and everyone else's loved ones safe at this time.

We are at war with the coronavirus, and we need a massive wartime manufacturing mobilization for coronavirus testing kits and personal protective equipment for medical personnel and emergency responders. That is why, last weekend, I was the first to call on President Trump to immediately use existing authorities under the Defense Production Act to bring all of the power of the Federal Government to bear in mobilizing industry to meet this crisis. It is why I authored the Senate resolution calling on him to do so. It is why I spoke directly to Vice President PENCE yesterday to urge the administration to take this critical action, and I am glad they are doing so.

The Defense Production Act allows the Federal Government to direct supplies of critical materials and equipment that our hospitals and first responders need. It allows us to mobilize industry to expand production and gives us the power to coordinate industry to respond to this crisis. We need to fully use all of those powers that are provided under this law.

That is why I am so glad President Trump has today invoked the power of the Defense Production Act to respond to the coronavirus crisis. I am glad he is exercising it. I am glad that after my conversation yesterday with Vice President PENCE, they decided to put this on the agenda for our country.

We need to massively increase private production of the lifesaving personal protective equipment, medical supplies and devices, and diagnostic testing supplies we need to combat this viral enemy. We need to activate our capable and talented domestic industry and bring the full weight of the Federal Government behind this effort.

We are talking about gowns, gloves, face shields, surgical masks, N95 respirators, ventilators, disinfectant wipes, and hand sanitizers. We do not have nearly enough of this lifesaving equipment.

For instance, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that the United States could need up to 3.5 billion respirator masks. Let me say that again. Our own Department of Health and Human Services says that we could need upwards of 3.5 billion respirator masks. But our strategic national stockpile, the country's emergency medical supply bank, holds only a tiny fraction of that, just 12 million respirator masks—not 3.5 billion but 12 million.

The medical community calls this personal protective equipment "PPE," but "PPE" also stands for a "promise to protect everyone," and this is a promise we should make and keep for our hospital personnel, first responders, and patients. Invoking the powers of the Defense Production Act will help ensure that we can keep this promise to our American heroes who are on the frontlines of battling this epidemic.

I have been in regular contact with the Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association and the Massachusetts Nurses Association, and both have issued a terrible alarm: There are insufficient medical equipment and supplies to test and treat affected individuals and protect healthcare workers and first responders. For example, the Berkshire hospital told me that they required 3,500 respirator masks a day. That is 35,000 in just 10 days for the Berkshire hospital, which is in the least populated part of our State—for just that one smaller hospital. Yet the entire State of Massachusetts recently received only 70,000 of these respirator masks. That is not nearly enough. We do not want our nurses and our doctors reusing or rationing masks.

Additionally, hospitals and labs across the Nation are trying to ramp up testing capacity but face shortages in test kits and supplies. But we need to dramatically scale up testing and ensure our continued ability to test. Our Nation must be able to conduct tens or hundreds of thousands of tests daily, ultimately testing millions of people over the course of our response. That means producing swabs, which we

are now running short of, and other testing materials.

We have used the Defense Production Act before—during the Korean war—to mobilize defense infrastructure and during the Cold War. Make no mistake, we are facing an equally deadly enemy in this virus, and we need to bring all of our authority and resources to bear to defeat it.

All of us owe a debt of gratitude to our frontline health and medical care workforce. They don't have a roadmap for what is happening right now. It is unprecedented. They just have skills, a commitment, and the hearts of heroes. We owe them the resources they need to be protected in order to do their jobs.

Sadly, this pandemic is going to get worse before it gets better. I had been calling for the President to declare a national emergency, which he finally did last week. Now that he has done so, we need Massachusetts to get all of the funding that is due. I have been in regular contact with Governor Baker and Mayor Walsh, and I will support their requests for Federal resources.

As the Senate works on an economic relief package that matches the scale of this crisis, we need to ensure that we put people and family first—no half measures, no hidden bailouts and giveaways just to big corporations: paid sick time for all workers; unemployment insurance for all workers, including for tipped workers, gig workers, contractors, home workers; expansion of SNAP, WIC, and other food security programs; no evictions, no cutting off of utilities, no cutting off of Wi-Fi; halting all deportations and releasing of detained immigrants who pose no threat to public safety; provide free Wi-Fi to low-income households with students who cannot afford it but are going to be at home because of school closures so that we don't have a huge homework gap that now explodes in our country, as poorer children don't have access to the Wi-Fi technology at home, so they can learn at the same pace that kids who just happen to live in wealthier families will have. We cannot allow that to happen. These kids should be able to learn at home, regardless of their income. We need free Wi-Fi for those kids. We have to reimburse our States and cities and Tribes. They are bearing the brunt of this crisis, and they need resources immediately.

My commitment to protecting the health professionals, ensuring the consumers, workers, and families of Massachusetts get relief from the impacts of the coronavirus is my No. 1 priority. We have to protect the small businesses in our country. We have to make sure they receive the resources they need. Millions and millions of small businesses right now are feeling enormous stress. We have to make it possible for them to receive the relief they need, the help they need in order to survive, and we have to put upfront whatever the capacity is to make sure

they get the resources they need. If that system in our country, where 48 percent of all workers are employed—small businesses in our country—and they are living on the margin, then we are going to have an economic catastrophe by August or September where millions of these small businesses will just declare bankruptcy. That is the bottom-line economic fact of the matter. We have to give them help, and we have to make sure we have the resources inside the Federal Government—the personnel—that will ensure we can deliver that relief too.

To the people of Massachusetts, I want you to know I am here for you, and I will help any of you individually who need any assistance during this emergency. This current moment may call for distancing and isolation, but we cannot and should not sever our basic human connections to one another because we are all in this together.

I want to end with the most important remark. We must continue to listen to the guidance of scientists and medical professionals. This pandemic is unprecedented and will require an unprecedented mobilization and response at every level of society. We can get through this, but it will require a commitment from every single one of us. We are one big family in the United States. Many families are going to be suffering. It is going to be our job to make sure that we protect those families, and it is the job of this institution to do so. We are the legislative first responders. We are the ones who have to provide the resources that then allow the first responders, the families in every community across our country to have the resources to help everyone in our society. That is our goal.

A pandemic should know no partisanship. Let us come together and produce the big package our country right now so desperately needs.

With that, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, thank you very much. This has been a trying and difficult and challenging time in our country and in my home State of Kansas. There are lots of conversations, care, and compassion going on. We can't give anybody a hug these days. We can't extend a hand—at least literally—but we are extending a hand to all of our friends and our neighbors—those across our community, those across our State, and across the country.

I am troubled, of course, by what circumstances Americans find themselves in. There are those who are in a poor circumstance in which they can recover from the circumstances that we face. I want to make sure that Kansans know that we hear their cries, that we know of their problems, and that work is afoot to try to make a difference.