

our relationship with China in every single way. It is inevitable. Starting now, we must take advantage of this knowledge. As we think about an exit strategy from the coronavirus crisis, we have to think about this. As we think about a way forward to bring manufacturing back to the United States, we need to remember this.

SECURING AMERICA'S MEDICINE CABINET

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I have spoken several times about the vulnerabilities in our pharmaceutical supply chain and again encourage my colleagues to support the bipartisan Securing America's Medicine Cabinet Act—or SAM-C Act—which I am sponsoring alongside my colleague from New Jersey, Senator MENENDEZ.

Without intervention, the FDA expects the pharmaceutical industry will continue to rely on Chinese companies to make the active pharmaceutical ingredients—or the APIs—that are necessary for so many of our prescription and over-the-counter drugs. The threat it poses to our supply chain is real.

On February 27, 2020, the FDA announced the shortage of one drug that is used to treat patients with coronavirus. They attributed the shortage to difficulties obtaining the API from a site in China. That site has been affected by—guess what—coronavirus.

We do not need to remain vulnerable. We need to realize that we are dealing with someone who has not been transparent. They have hidden information from us. They are causing shortages of drugs and vaccines and antibiotics. It is time for us to learn from these lessons. If we ignore them, we do so at our own peril.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. JONES. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to speak today in the wake of what is going on.

I appreciate my colleague from Tennessee talking about supply chains. I completely agree with her. It is something that we are going to have to seriously look at as we get through this process. We have become too dependent. I appreciate her efforts in that regard.

I want to talk today—I know we have a lot going on up here. For those who are watching and the American people, you need to understand that while this Gallery may be empty and this floor may be empty, there is a lot going on in the Senate right now. There is a lot happening to try to make sure that we save this economy, that we do those things necessary to try to make sure our businesses, our workers, and our economy from all sectors are saved.

Again, I want to go back to the thing you can do as Americans, and that is to stop the spread of this virus. Do social

distancing. Do those things we have talked about now for several weeks to try to get folks to do their part because we are trying to do our part. We are doing this in an incredibly bipartisan effort. I think you will see a lot of things coming out of the Senate and out of the House, along with the administration, to try to make sure we do those things for Americans.

Over the past few weeks, I have talked with countless business owners and local and State officials. I have heard from a lot of folks who are scared to death, working folks who are now at home. They are not telecommuting because their jobs are not like that. They are alarmed about where we are today and where we are going to be tomorrow and next week and over the coming weeks and even potentially months.

Businesses are having to lay off folks. They are having to furlough workers, sending a surge of folks to the unemployment line. We have seen that in just the last few days, which is something that, as we were moving, we thought we would not see.

Small businesses, like restaurants and Main Street retailers, will go bankrupt if we are not careful. They are going to go bankrupt without customers, as folks stay home and practice the social distancing that we know we have to do and as States start enacting forced closures of schools and events. Those businesses will shutter. Hopefully, it will only be a temporary shutting.

First and foremost, there are steps we can all take to stop the spread of the virus and begin to get the economy on the right track. It is up to us individually. In the meantime, we, as Members of Congress and public officials across this country—from local county officials and city officials to the Governors and State legislators and Members of Congress—we have to do all we can to make sure our businesses, particularly the small businesses, which make up an overwhelming amount of business in the State of Alabama in particular, can continue to meet payroll and keep workers paid so that they can then continue to meet their obligations. That is where my proposal comes in that I talked to a number of colleagues about.

In addition to providing the same kind of direct assistance payments that are being kicked around now—whether it is through checks or in some form or another that people are widely talking about right now—I would also like to see a new fund that is created to quickly get cash into the hands of small businesses so they can make their payroll and not have to lay off workers. I am calling this the small business lifeline fund. It would provide a no-interest bridge loan for up to 3 months, to be paid back over 5 years with no interest. This is a work-in-progress, so there are even proposals to make sure that this loan can be forgiven in certain circumstances. It

could be administered through the Small Business Administration. It would offer loans up to 75 percent of a business's last 3 months of payroll, with no one employee receiving more than \$5,000.

I want to repeat that because it would affect so many people in this country. It would offer loans up to 75 percent of a business's last 3 months of payroll, with no one employee receiving more than \$5,000 per month.

The key to this fund is, it would pass directly through the payroll companies. Payroll companies around this country are used by about 40 percent of American businesses. They mostly cater to the small businesses with fewer than 500 employees. Payroll companies are in the best position to do this because they already have the infrastructure in place. They are a smart choice because they have payroll history. They have the employee data that makes this quick. It makes it efficient. It uses the infrastructure and the pipelines that already exist without having to go back and reinvent or create a new whole set of dynamics that may or may not work. We know the payroll company system in this country works. Again, 40 percent of folks use it.

This process would help to alleviate the strain on our unemployment program. It would be a seamless way to continue to pay workers, while also ensuring that payroll taxes can continue to fund important programs, like Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

I want you to think about this. What we are talking about doing is not just a one-time \$1,000 check or two-time \$1,000 check; it is literally funding payroll the way it exists—maybe only 75 percent of it. But people who are used to getting those payroll checks through a payroll processor have their taxes deducted, they have their Social Security deducted, and they have their Medicaid and Medicare expenses deducted. Those things would still come in. It is just that we have created a fund from the Federal Government to do that. Part of what we are fronting comes right back to the Federal Government.

As part of this, we would also like to offer assistance to folks who are self-employed or run microbusinesses. According to IRS data, in 2017, there were some 26 million sole proprietorships in the United States. That is a lot of folks out there working hard, hustling every day to make their businesses—their little piece of the American dream—successful, but they don't have the cash reserves to fall back on in times like these. We could carve this out and make sure they are taken care of in the short run.

This is not the time, in my view, to shortchange the economy. This is not the time to send out just a check here and a check there—especially for those who are the most vulnerable to the cataclysmic shocks we have seen in recent weeks. We have to be bold. We have to

be big. We need to act fast. We need to cut the bureaucracy. That is why using these payroll companies makes so much sense.

Again, I want to emphasize that this is only one piece of this overall puzzle. It doesn't cover everyone. It will not cover folks in the gig economy. We have to do other things to make sure unemployment insurance and other things are available to them in a similar fashion. But this is a big piece of the puzzle that can get money directly to folks. Their wages can get to folks—their wages can get to them right now so that if we also have to do things like forbearance on mortgages and rents, we don't have to do it across the board because these folks will have the money to pay those mortgages and pay those rents and help those businesses stay afloat as well. The ripple effect of doing something like this, I believe, would be enormous.

With this small business lifeline fund, we can send a message to folks on Main Street, who are the lifeblood of our communities. We can take this idea up and keep them afloat so they can get right back on track as soon as we get things back to normal.

Right now, they need us. They need us in Congress. They need us at the local level, and they need us at the State level.

I urge my colleagues to look at this very seriously—at this package that we are putting together and that we will, hopefully, get done in the next day or, hopefully, in hours—so we can all get back to our States and our families and do those things that are necessary. Keep in mind: I think folks will understand that whatever we do in the next day or so will only be the next step.

I mean, I don't want anybody who is listening to anything any of us has to say to think that this is the end of it and that we are just going to finish our work and go home. We are going to have to monitor this constantly. We don't know what the future holds in some aspects. So we will be back, if necessary, and, if necessary, we will do things differently.

There are two other things I want to mention before I yield the floor, one of which I have talked about with regard to my State for a long time, and that is the need for Medicaid expansion.

Alabama is one of those few States—I think out of 14 or 15 States—that did not expand Medicaid. As part of the package we are talking about now, we increase the Federal Government's portion of that and add additional Medicaid funds. For those States like Alabama, we will get the extra benefits for sure, but we will not get as much as we should because we will not have expanded Medicaid.

Senator WARNER and I have a bill. It is called the SAME Act, or the States Achieve Medicaid Expansion Act. It is not mandatory. It does not make the States that haven't achieved Medicaid expansion do that, but it gives them the same incentives they had a number

of years ago. In a State like Alabama, some 300,000 people could get access to Medicaid who do not have insurance right now and cannot get it but who are wondering in our rural communities and everywhere in the State of Alabama: What in the world am I going to do if I catch this virus? Where am I going to go?

Ultimately, with our hospitals, our doctors, and our safety nets that we are putting in as part of this package, we are going to have to cover it anyway. We all know that, sooner or later, we are going to have to cover it. So I would love to see the SAME Act, or the States Achieve Medicaid Expansion Act, get out there and be a part of this package. Let States have the opportunity. It is a States' rights issue. Not a single State would have to expand Medicaid if we pass this bill, but we would at least let those local leaders decide for themselves whether it would be time to give this opportunity to so many of the people in our States who are caught between Medicaid and jobs in which they are eligible for health insurance benefits. It would be a quick, easy way to make sure we are doing our part, and I urge that this be put in there.

Finally, I have heard from so many people today who are in our underserved communities in Alabama—the African-American community, the poor communities in Alabama. The preachers are calling, and the mayors are calling. I have been on the phone all day because they are concerned. It is not just that they are concerned because they don't believe the State has them in mind, for I have talked to State officials in Alabama, and there are plans.

The fact of the matter is that in this country, across the 50 States, we still don't have enough tests, and we don't have enough personal protection equipment for my hospitals, for my testing labs, and for everybody in Alabama. It is just like in every other State. We are hurting, and we need those supplies. We are giving them money, and the States are doing a good job. Yet I want to make sure that, in Alabama and across this country, we don't leave out the poorest of the poor; that we don't leave out the underserved communities; and that we just don't put testing facilities in the big, urban areas—at the mega churches or the big hospitals, like I have in Birmingham, which are awesome. We have to make sure that we have these clinics set up around the State, such as in the Black Belt of Alabama—the poorest of Alabama's counties—wherein people can't drive an hour and a half or 2 hours to get tests. We have to make sure that we spread this out, because this disease is going to spread out. This disease is not just going to be concentrated in our urban areas. It is going to continue to spread.

In these underserved areas in particular, families live together. Grandmothers take care of their grand-

children. Aunts and uncles take care of their nieces and nephews. They are all there together, and we have to figure out a way to protect them. We have to figure out a way to get those tests to them and to make sure that they are treated just as if they were part of our urban areas that have easier and ready access.

I end with what I talked about the other day and with which I have ended so many of my talks, and that is back to the people of Alabama and the American people.

I can assure you we are doing a lot up here. I see my friend from Alaska, who is presiding today. I know she has been working. I have watched her back here as she has worked the phones and talked to different people. Everywhere I go, I do see that Senators—most of us—are doing things by phone and are doing things remotely. Everybody is working the phones back in their States to make sure we do the right thing.

Yet, at the end of the day, this is about you. This is about the people of America. Everyone in this country—to use a phrase from the old civil rights days in Birmingham, AL—is a foot soldier in this movement. Everyone can do his part. We can appropriate money, and we can designate, and we can give tax breaks. We can do those things that are necessary that we as the Federal Government can do, but we can't stop the spread of this virus. A U.S. Senator cannot stop the spread of this virus. We can only stop it among ourselves. We can't stop it across this country. Only you can do that.

Only the foot soldiers in America—the hundreds of millions of people we have in this country—can stop the spread of the virus by heeding the warnings and by doing the things that are necessary with social distancing and washing their hands. I think my hands are just about raw since I have washed them so much. We are the foot soldiers.

You are the foot soldiers. You can stop the spread. The other day, when I was here on the floor, I pulled out a picture of my old friend from my childhood, Smokey Bear, who said that only you can prevent forest fires. I talked about the fact that the coronavirus, the COVID-19 virus, is a forest fire across the country, and you can help to stop the spread.

I want to be a little bit more patriotic about it today. I invoke one of my heroes who used this desk at one point, John F. Kennedy. It was 59 years ago when John F. Kennedy was sworn in as President of the United States and uttered the famous words that sent such an emotion throughout America and that really got so many in this country to be patriotic and stand up for what we do.

He said: "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."

That is what all Americans have to ask themselves today: What can I do for my country?

It is not like a day when we have a tornado that has ripped through, and you can go out and get a chain saw and help your neighbor. It is not like a day when a hurricane has come through, and you can go get bottles of water and diapers to send to folks. What you can do for your country today is to stop the spread of this virus. What you can do for your country is to try to stay home as much as you can—social distancing. Work those things. That is what you can do for your country.

If you do that, yes, businesses are going to have problems. We know it. That is what we are trying to work on—making sure we provide that safety net and making sure we provide the necessary tools so that, if we can blunt that curve—if we can get past this—then we will come back even stronger.

To get there, we have to have you. We have to have you stand up and speak out to everyone—to do your part, to do those things that are necessary to make sure you do for your country what you should be doing. Help everyone in this country, and help everyone around you. When we do that, we will blunt this curve. We will make this the least severe as possible, and we will move forward and be stronger and better because, at the end of the day, we are the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

(Ms. MURKOWSKI assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Executive Calendar Nos. 604 and 606 through 628 and all nominations on the Secretary's desk in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy; that the nominations be confirmed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Jason E. Bailey
Col. Kenyon K. Bell
Col. William D. Betts
Col. Shawn W. Campbell
Col. Houston R. Cantwell
Col. Eric A. Carney
Col. Sean M. Choquette
Col. Michael E. Conley
Col. Eric P. Delange

Col. Daniel A. Devove
Col. Gerald A. Donohue
Col. Russell D. Driggers
Col. Michael R. Drowley
Col. John R. Edwards
Col. Todd A. Fogle
Col. Jennifer Hammerstedt
Col. Matthew W. Higer
Col. Jason T. Hinds
Col. Stacy J. Huser
Col. William H. Kale
Col. Joseph D. Kunkel
Col. Leslie A. Maher
Col. Michael H. Manion
Col. Paul D. Moga
Col. Joshua M. Olson
Col. Derek J. O'Malley
Col. Brandon D. Parker
Col. Stephen G. Purdy, Jr.
Col. Mark B. Pye
Col. Neil R. Richardson
Col. Patrick S. Ryder
Col. Christopher S. Sage
Col. Jennifer M. Short
Col. Dale R. White
Col. Parker H. Wright

IN THE MARINE CORPS

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Marine Corps to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Scott F. Benedict
Brig. Gen. Jason Q. Bohm
Brig. Gen. Francis L. Donovan
Brig. Gen. Bradford J. Gering
Brig. Gen. James F. Glynn
Brig. Gen. David W. Maxwell
Brig. Gen. William H. Seely, III
Brig. Gen. Roger B. Turner, Jr.

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

Lt. Gen. Edward M. Daly

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Randy B. Crites

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Samuel J. Paparo, Jr.

IN THE ARMY

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Steven L. Allen
Col. Robert L. Barrie, Jr.
Col. Guillaume N. Beaupere
Col. Christopher G. Beck
Col. Trevor J. Bredenkamp
Col. Winston P. Brooks
Col. Jacqueline D. Brown
Col. Larry Q. Burris, Jr.
Col. Paul G. Craft
Col. Lance G. Curtis
Col. Glenn A. Dean, III
Col. Matthew L. Eichburg
Col. David C. Foley
Col. Patrick L. Gaydon
Col. Clair A. Gill

Col. Mark A. Holler
Col. Daryl O. Hood
Col. Mark J. Hovatter
Col. James P. Isenhower, III
Col. Ryan M. Janovic
Col. Michael B. Lalor
Col. Steven M. Marks
Col. Gene D. Meredith
Col. Thomas W. O'Connor, Jr.
Col. Isaac J. Peltier
Col. Keith C. Phillips
Col. Ronald R. Ragin
Col. Hope C. Rampy
Col. William A. Ryan, III
Col. David F. Stewart
Col. David C. Trybula
Col. Colin P. Tuley
Col. John W. Weidner
Col. Timothy P. White
Col. David B. Womack
Col. Richard L. Zellmann

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Robert L. Marion

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. David A. Krumm

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Timothy G. Fay

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Jon T. Thomas

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be admiral

Adm. Robert P. Burke

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Anne M. Swap

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Michael W. Studeman

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Stuart P. Baker
Rear Adm. (lh) Michael D. Bernacchi, Jr.
Rear Adm. (lh) Frank M. Bradley
Rear Adm. (lh) Daniel L. Cheever
Rear Adm. (lh) Yvette M. Davids
Rear Adm. (lh) Daniel W. Dwyer
Rear Adm. (lh) Peter A. Garvin
Rear Adm. (lh) Alvin Holsey