

toothpaste from a tube. The word is we are hearing from Mnuchin and Powell on the 19th. That is close to 2 months after we passed COVID 3. That is not oversight. That is not Congress's job—at any time. It is made even worse because we are in a crisis.

Then, last night, amazingly, the Republican leader explained that Republicans have “not yet felt the urgency of acting immediately.” Let me repeat that. With millions of Americans sick and tens of thousands dying, with depression levels of unemployment, the Republican leader, Senator McCONNELL, said that Republicans have “not yet felt the urgency of acting immediately.”

We live in a divided nation, but one thing that pretty much everyone agrees on is that there is a great deal of urgency right now.

Leader McCONNELL, there is nothing more urgent to a family that is struggling to feed their children and keep a roof over their heads. Leader McCONNELL, there is nothing more urgent to a small business owner who is inches away from closing the doors of his life's work. The Republican leadership needs to wake up—wake up—to the dire economic reality tens of millions of Americans are facing.

We must pass big, bold legislation to confront the crisis before us. That is just what the House of Representatives is working on right now. We don't believe that our two parties will agree on everything we must do, but at the very least—at the very least—we should agree there is an urgency to provide relief to our citizens who are suffering and struggling.

President Hoover lacked the urgency to get the Federal Government involved at the outset of the Great Depression. Every history book teaches us that his error prolonged and likely deepened the suffering of American workers. When Republican leader looks at unemployment numbers and say that we don't need to act immediately, that government has done enough already, they are the latter-day Herbert Hoovers, and I fear it could lead to similar results, a deeper and longer recession, and—God forbid, but it is not out of the question—a second Great Depression because of the inaction and incompetence of the President, being followed obediently, wrongly by the Republican Senators.

The lack of urgency in the Republican Party extends down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Oval Office. From almost the very beginning of this crisis, President Trump has downplayed its severity and tried to wish it out of existence.

The President said coronavirus might disappear “miraculously”—his word. He said it was a hoax. He said the warm weather might take care of it. He pitched quack medicines and speculated that a vaccine could be ready in 2 months. Two months ago, the President said that “anybody who wants a test can get a test,” which is not even close to being true.

The President's words are reckless—constant belittling of the crisis, ignoring the crisis, burying the truth, and burying his head in the sand—and it has prolonged and made the crisis worse, and the American people know it.

That is why he lashes out—the President does—at reporters who ask him fair questions. That is why. He knows he is to blame for a good part of the depth and prolongation of this crisis. He knows that. Yet he can't bring himself to face the truth. He can't bring himself to tell the American people the truth. Pitching quack medicines, telling people it is going to go away, saying yesterday “that we have met the moment and we have prevailed.” What planet is he on?

More than 30 million are unemployed, and “we have prevailed”? There are 1.3 million infected and 80,000 American fatalities, and those numbers are still growing. And “we have prevailed”?

The President's comments show a stunning disregard for the truth, and it hurts every American. I don't care what your politics is. No one should tolerate a President who ignores the truth, says whatever pops into his head, whether it is true or false or dangerous, and then moves on his merry way to speak the next untruth and talk about the next quack cure.

The President's comments show a stunning disregard for the truth. It may have been in the Rose Garden and not on the deck of a battleship, but President Trump saying “We have prevailed” is akin to declaring “mission accomplished” long before the battles are over and the war is won.

Later on, the President, as usual, tries to correct what he said—or his advisers do. He said he only meant testing, that we have prevailed on testing. But that is false too. Even the corrections are false. The United States is testing about 300,000 people a day. Most experts believe the number is inadequate to stop this outbreak and ensure that when we reopen, we do so safely. We have prevailed on testing? Not remotely.

Here is what is so ironic about the President hiding his head in the sand and not tackling the testing issue in a real way. He is desperate that we get back to work, but the only way to get back to work is when we have enough tests—not just for those who are very ill but for anyone who wants it. You know, the White House—they all test. Anyone who walks in the White House is tested. Why isn't that good enough for all the American people?

Why is it that even in States that have opened up, like Georgia, the stores are still empty? Because people are worried, justifiably. The way to remove that worry or at least greatly reduce it is to make sure everyone can be tested.

When New Rochelle became the first quarantined city, I called the mayor and said: What do you need to get rid

of this quarantine? He said he needed enough testing so that he could test every person in New Rochelle, and those who tested positive, he would say they have to quarantine and stay home, and those who didn't could go to work and shop in the stores and get our community going.

Most of the countries—I think just about every one of the countries that has dealt successfully with the coronavirus has had far more testing at the right times and the right places than we have.

Maybe Dr. Fauci can set things straight this morning. Dr. Fauci and a few other administration officials are testifying before the HELP Committee remotely. It will be one of the first times that Fauci and the others have appeared publicly without the President lurking over their shoulders, modifying their answers, or directly contradicting their advice.

Dr. Fauci, please don't pull any punches, particularly when you are asked questions. We know the White House may have to approve the statement you make, and they will mute it. It was muted this morning and very technical. But you don't have to do that when the questions are asked. Don't pull punches. Tell the American people the truth. Dr. Fauci, you have an obligation to tell the American people the truth because only that will save lives and reduce the economic length of this crisis. And, Dr. Fauci, maybe if you tell the truth in this opportunity—a hearing without the President looking over your shoulder—maybe your testimony, Dr. Fauci—I hope your testimony, Dr. Fauci, reaches not only the American people but a President who is ready to throw caution to the wind in order to reopen the country. Please, Dr. Fauci, don't pull punches.

#### TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. One final matter today. Today, the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in a case that will determine whether the President can block access to his tax returns and other financial documents.

You may not think this is related to COVID, but in a certain sense, it is. In a sense, the case about the President's tax returns has something in common with the President's response to coronavirus: President Trump wants to hide the truth. He wants to hide the truth about coronavirus and the depth of the problem and how we deal with it. He wants to hide the truth and not release his tax returns.

For 40 years, every President has disclosed his personal financial information to avoid even the perception of impropriety or self-dealing, but this President has used every avenue to deny such transparency. What is President Trump hiding in his taxes? The President is not an ordinary citizen anymore; he is President of the United States. The American people have a

right to see how he has dealt with his taxes. President Trump has an obligation to show them. Why has President Trump fought so hard to deny the American people this information?

If this Court wants to prove, at least in one step, that they are not highly political and don't always side with President Trump, I hope they will step up to the plate and rule that the President does not have the unilateral power to shield his tax returns from the American people. On this issue, like so many others, the American people deserve the truth—not what the President wants us to believe but the truth.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, there was a meeting last week—a telephone conference call—of the leaders of a dozen major nations around the world. It was a meeting to discuss something we are all thinking about, the answer to the question everyone in America asks every day: How will this end? When will this end? In this telephone conference, leaders from other nations talked about the ending that most of us envision—the discovery of a safe and effective vaccine that can protect people around the world from the scourge of this coronavirus.

I am not sure when that vaccine will be discovered—the sooner the better—but the big question we need to ask ourselves at this point is, Where will it be discovered, and what benefit will it provide for the United States?

You see, there was one major nation that boycotted this international telephone conference about discovering a vaccine. It was the United States. President Trump decided not to participate with the leaders of nations from around the world in this global conversation about finding a safe and effective vaccine to fight coronavirus. I am not sure what his motive was. But we know that at least 94 other vaccines are being explored and worked on in nations around the world—in England, for example, and in Germany and so many other countries. They are looking for the same safe and effective vaccine as we in the United States are looking for.

I have great faith and confidence in the men and women in medical research in the United States and the production facilities in our country, but I am not so proud or so vain as to believe that no other country could find that safe and effective vaccine.

And if they did—and if they did—would we hesitate for a moment to turn to a country and say that the United States wants to be part of producing that vaccine and receiving that vaccine for the people who live here?

Why would the President of the United States decide we are going to boycott that conference, stay away from it? Oh, I am sure he has a dozen reasons, but they don't seem very convincing to me. We should be at the table wherever there is a serious, credible effort to discover a vaccine. The United States should be participating.

They were trying to raise \$8 billion. That is a lot of money, but remember, we are dealing with an effort to rescue our economy from coronavirus, which is now in the range of \$2.8 trillion. They are asking the participants to put in money. Norway said it would pledge \$1 billion—Norway. The European Union said it would pledge \$1 billion toward this global vaccine effort. The United States should have been at that table. We should be all in for any credible effort to find this vaccine as quickly as possible. I have introduced a resolution calling on the administration to reverse its position and to join in this effort.

I want to commend Bill and Melinda Gates, who participated in that telephone conference and pledged millions of dollars of their own funds on behalf of the United States. Thank you to the Gates family for caring.

Now, Mr. President, you should join them.

This morning, the Republican leader came to the floor to talk about the problems and challenges that we face and the fact that there is another bill that is going to be offered publicly this week by Speaker NANCY PELOSI—the next in a succession of legislation that we have considered over the last several weeks.

We have seen dramatic investments in unemployment insurance for a record number of unemployed people in this country. We have seen dramatic investments in the small businesses of America, to give them a fighting chance to reopen and to prosper in the future. I have joined in all of these on a bipartisan basis, and I will continue to.

I don't know the specifics of Speaker PELOSI's proposal. Senator MCCONNELL came to the floor and warned us not to think big and not to think about transformational things. Then, of course, he went back to his time-honored course about the question of liability.

Senator MCCONNELL has come to the floor repeatedly—repeatedly—and said that before he would consider another COVID-19 rescue bill, he would need to see what he calls a redline honored when it comes to immunity from lawsuits.

What is being proposed by Speaker PELOSI when it comes to State and local governments is really an affirmation of what has been said by every one of us when it comes to our first re-

sponders, the police, the firefighters, the paramedics, the healthcare workers, and the teachers. What she says in the bill is that they have been hit and been hit hard at the State and local government levels by this COVID-19. She is proposing, as I understand it, a substantial commitment to help those units of government that have truly been hurt by this coronavirus. What she is asking for, really, is whether or not all of our speeches about healthcare workers, police, first responders, firefighters, and teachers are really credible and whether, in fact, we will come up with the resources that are needed.

Senator MCCONNELL has said that he will not support that legislation unless—as he calls it—his redline of liability immunity is honored. What he is saying is that he refuses to fund our police, firefighters, paramedics, and teachers unless we provide guaranteed business immunity for corporations. This is, sadly, an invitation for irresponsible corporations and businesses to cut corners when it comes to protecting workers and those customers and such who would be threatened by coronavirus.

The McConnell redline threat would result in more people being infected by the coronavirus and more people getting sick. That is not what we want. There is a better way. We should be talking about how to do this properly.

This afternoon there will be a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee. One of the witnesses being called by the Republicans is a man named Kevin Smartt. He is the chief executive officer and president of Kwik Chek food stores in Bonham, TX. He is testifying on behalf of the National Association of Convenience Stores on this question of liability.

I read his statement this morning in preparation for the hearing, and I commend it to my colleagues because I want them to listen carefully to what Mr. Smartt says he believes businesses need. Here is what he says. He talks about his own company Kwik Chek.

Kwik Chek's first priority is the safety of our employees and customers. Beginning in early March, we adjusted our daily protocols to mitigate the spread of the virus. This was a challenge—

Listen to what Mr. Smartt says—because the guidance provided by the CDC, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, as well as State and local governments, often conflicted with one another in addition to being vague and difficult to follow. Yet despite many uncertainties, including the constantly fluctuating public health guidelines, we began to adjust to the pandemic.

Mr. Smartt is not saying that businesses don't have a responsibility here. He is accepting that responsibility to create a safe environment for workers and customers, but he is saying to us: When are you going to establish the standards? Why do you keep changing the standards?

Here we are with Senator MCCONNELL threatening to derail the next rescue