

themselves of liability. They certainly have a valid defense to any claims of wrongdoing. But this notion that comes before us on the floor from the Republican side goes to an extreme—asking for government immunity from the conduct of businesses in the midst of this pandemic without holding them to any standards. We are still waiting for an explanation. Why would we allow the workplace to be more dangerous for employees? Why would we allow the business place to be more dangerous for customers?

If the owner is willing to live up to reasonable standards established based on science and health, in my mind, that is a good defense, and that is the way it should be. To do otherwise is to give a green light to businesses that don't follow standards, endangering their workers, their employees. It means more people are going to get infected and sick in America—the last thing we need.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first I want to thank my friend and colleague, the senior Senator from the State of Illinois. He is always on the money, pushing this country to do what its better angels recommend, and I hope America listens to his floor speech today and every day because what he is doing would make America a better, stronger, more unified, more humane, and more compassionate place.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to inflict our country, businesses are suffering, families are struggling to pay the rent, millions of Americans are filing for unemployment every single week, and tens of thousands of Americans are dying.

Every aspect of American society has been changed by this crisis—except, perhaps, the Republican Senate. Here it is business as usual.

Leader MCCONNELL has spent 3 weeks of the Senate's time largely on nominations, only one of whom is directly related to COVID-19. There is not one bill on the floor of the Senate having to do with COVID in the entire month of May. The leader has put none on the floor.

Democrats have had to relentlessly pressure our colleagues to hold even the most routine and needed oversight hearings on the coronavirus. Coronavirus is raging, and people are upset about how the administration is implementing it. We don't have hearings until we push, push, push for them, and then they happen few, far between, and too late.

It would be one thing if the Republican majority were doing this other business while negotiating with Democrats on the next phase of emergency relief, but Republicans are not negotiating about the next phase of emergency relief. Many of my colleagues on

the other side have said that more relief just isn't necessary.

The Republican leader rejected legislation from the House of Representatives before the bill was even drafted—a knee-jerk partisan response at a time when we should be working together to help our suffering constituents. For the life of me, I don't know why it has been so difficult to get our friends on the other side to focus on the ongoing national crisis, and it appears that the lack of focus, the lack of urgency, and the lack of compassion from the Republican majority are about to get even worse.

Today, in the Homeland Security Committee, the Republican chairman has convened a hearing that slanders the family of the President's political opponent. Believe it or not, this powerful Senate committee, with broad jurisdiction over so many aspects of the government's response to the ongoing pandemic, is prioritizing yet another attempt to smear Vice President Biden. The committee could be holding a hearing today with the FEMA Administrator to discuss disaster assistance. But, no, the highest priority of Senate Republicans lies in promoting conspiracy theories that have already been discredited on numerous occasions—conspiracy theories, which, by the way, are known to be part of Russian disinformation campaigns. Our Republican majority is using Russian propaganda to try to damage a political opponent. Is that a disgrace? Is that a disgrace?

The Republican chairman is pressing forward, without Members even receiving a briefing from the intelligence community. Even more shameful, the company my colleague from Wisconsin wants to subpoena is cooperating with the committee in providing documents. It appears this subpoena is just for show—a way to create the false impression of wrongdoing. It is like in a Third World dictatorship, a show trial with no basis in fact, with no due process, and with no reality.

Not to be outdone, the Republican chairman of the Judiciary Committee has asked members of his committee to consider subpoenas related to yet another conspiracy theory pushed by President Trump—a theory that attempts to rewrite the history of Russian interference in the 2016 election to match the fiction in President Trump's head. It seems Republicans want to dive into the deepest muck of right-wing conspiracy to invent scapegoats for the President to use in his reelection campaign.

The conspiracy caucus is back. It reared its ugly head in December and has been on a simmer ever since. Now it is boiling over once again, shamefully, in the middle of a public health crisis and an economic disaster that require all of us to focus on the problems at hand.

Senate Republicans aren't drafting legislation to help the unemployed. They are holding sham hearings about

the family of the President's political rival. Senate Republicans aren't debating measures to increase testing. They are turning Senate committee rooms into the studio of "FOX & Friends." Senate Republicans are not just ignoring the coronavirus. They are practically sprinting toward a partisan election, making this Chamber part of a reelection campaign—not what it was ever intended to be by the Founding Fathers or anyone else, until this fever to bow down to President Trump's wild conspiracy theories that has overtaken just about every Senate Republican.

Here is what Chairman GRAHAM said about his "investigation" yesterday. Here is what he said:

I want to get all the information out there. I want to do it before the election.

Well, there is a Republican intention right there—"do it before the election."

Leader MCCONNELL says that Republicans have not felt the urgency yet to act on the coronavirus, but it sure sounds like there is some urgency to get these phony investigations going before November. A fever is raging in the conspiracy caucus. They are worried about the outcome of the election. They are worried that President Trump—they know—has done a very poor job in dealing with this crisis. So they turn to wild conspiracy theories and turn the Senate, which should be debating and discussing coronavirus relief, into sort of a partisan sham Chamber. It is disgraceful.

Now, Leader MCCONNELL gave a lengthy speech on the floor of the Senate yesterday giving cover to many of the President's crackpot theories about what transpired in 2016. I will just say this: Leader MCCONNELL reportedly watered down a bipartisan warning about Russian interference in the fall of 2016. He stalled for years on election security funding, and still, to this day, is blocking election security funding. If Leader MCCONNELL wants to look back at the history of Russian interference in the 2016 election, he should look in the mirror. He might not like the way his own role is viewed.

The American people should be just furious with Washington Republicans, and so many are—more and more every day. Americans are waiting in modern-day breadlines, jammed into municipal buildings, and cars snaked around parking lots and city blocks. It is so sad to look at these pictures. Doctors and nurses and other caregivers have been working nonstop to save American lives, often without the proper equipment. Millions of American workers are sitting at home, having lost their jobs, through no fault of their own, dreading the day the next rent payment comes due. Here in Washington, Senate Republicans feel no urgency to help these Americans. They are too busy touting conspiracy theories and electioneering for the President.

Speaking of the President, he was here yesterday on the Capitol to have

lunch with Senate Republicans. They had a giant pep rally. They got all fired up to do nothing. That was the conclusion. On the way out of the Capitol, the President was asked about the fact that the United States leads the world in confirmed cases of coronavirus, and here is what President Trump said—amazingly. Listen to this. Asked about leading the world in confirmed cases of coronavirus, the President said:

I don't look at that as a bad thing. I look at that in a certain respect as being a good thing because it means our testing is much better. . . . So I view it as a badge of honor.

Really? First of all, our testing is not much better. States are struggling to get people tested due to confusion and a lack of national leadership. Many experts believe we are far short on what we need on testing. None of these experts, who actually understands the testing and this virus, would say the President deserves a badge of honor for his work. But even more galling is the idea that lots of cases of coronavirus is “a good thing.” That is what the President said: Having lots of cases of coronavirus is “a good thing.”

A lot of cases is not “a good thing,” Mr. President. It means people are sick and people are dying. A lot of cases means more Americans are in the hospital, more Americans in ICU struggling to breathe on ventilators. A lot of cases means Americans will die as a result of the virus that has already claimed the lives of nearly 100,000. A lot of cases means a lot more Americans are seriously ill. Mr. President, that is not “a good thing.” Even your mind, which seems so warped at times, cannot really believe that.

There is no “honor” in leading the world in the number of people infected with coronavirus. For the United States to have 1.5 million cases is nothing to celebrate. It is something to be ashamed of. Calling it a “badge of honor” isn't just wrong, it is sick, and it is an insult to every American family who loses a loved one to this evil disease.

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. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded, and I ask unanimous consent that I be able to conclude my remarks before the 11 o'clock vote.

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

5G

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, the internet has been a part of our daily lives for quite a while now: Netflix, Twitter, and Amazon. The internet has taken on new importance during the coronavirus pandemic. It has become the main source of connection with friends and family. It has enabled many people to work from home to help reduce the spread of the virus. It

is the main reason that schools and colleges have been able to continue teaching students.

It has drastically expanded nascent services, like telehealth, which has allowed doctors and other medical professionals to provide patient care remotely.

With all of this new internet traffic, of course, has come a much greater load on networks. Not all countries' networks have held up to the strain. In Europe, networks have had to slow streaming and ask providers like Netflix to diminish the quality of their videos.

Here in the United States, our networks have faced very few problems, and there is a reason for that. Europe and the United States have very different regulatory regimes for the internet. In Europe, the internet has been regulated using outdated communications rules designed for telephone monopolies. This has resulted in heavy-handed regulation, which has discouraged companies from investing in communications infrastructure and broadband expansion.

The resulting lack of reliable infrastructure is the primary reason internet performance in Europe has suffered during the pandemic. The regulatory situation in the United States, on the other hand, has been much different. With a few exceptions, like the brief imposition of so-called net neutrality regulations in 2015, our country has taken a light-touch approach to internet regulation.

This has encouraged companies to invest in the latest communications infrastructure and new technologies to make more efficient use of spectrum. Thanks to that investment, when coronavirus hit and internet usage soared, American networks were ready. Despite the additional burden on networks during the pandemic, Americans have been able to enjoy the same high speeds and streaming quality that they typically enjoy. Right now, most Americans are using 4G networks.

The next generation of internet, 5G, is here. 5G networks are starting to be deployed, including in my home State of South Dakota. If we want the United States to handle 5G the way that we handled 4G and if we want our 5G networks to be as successful as our 4G networks, we still have some work to do.

One thing that is absolutely essential is maintaining the light-touch regulatory approach that has produced so much U.S. investment and innovation. Despite the success of light-touch regulation, there is always a segment of the Democratic Party pushing for greater government regulation of the internet, and that would chill American broadband investment.

When Democrats briefly succeeded in forcing through heavier government regulations in the latter part of the Obama Presidency, broadband infrastructure investment by U.S. companies dropped significantly, and it only rebounded when the Federal Commu-

nications Commission, under Chairman Pai, rolled back these heavyhanded regulations.

Second, the United States still has more work to do to deploy the infrastructure necessary for 5G. While 4G relies on traditional cell phone towers, 5G technology will also require small antennas called “small cells” that can often be attached to existing infrastructure, like utility poles or buildings.

Last year, I introduced legislation, the STREAMLINE Act, to make it easier for companies to deploy these small cells so that we can get the infrastructure in place for 5G technology. We also need to update Federal regulations to ensure that it doesn't take months or years to get permits for wireless infrastructure.

Infrastructure is a key part of the 5G equation. The other key part is spectrum. Like all internet technology, 5G relies on radio spectrum—what we commonly call the airwaves. Radio spectrum is divided into bands—low band, mid band, and high band. 5G will rely upon all three.

The United States has done a good job freeing up high-band spectrum for 5G, but we still need to free up more mid-band spectrum to see full-scale 5G deployment.

In 2018, Congress passed my MOBILE NOW Act, which helped lay the groundwork for freeing up more mid-band spectrum.

This past November, Senator WICKER and I introduced the 5G Spectrum Act to require the Federal Communications Commission to free up a critical portion of mid-band spectrum, commonly referred to as the C-band for 5G use.

While Congress did not enact our legislation at the end of February, the Federal Communications Commission announced that it would adopt a framework similar to that outlined in our bill to make 280 megahertz of C-band spectrum available for 5G.

Finally, we need to ensure that we have the workforce in place to handle the demands of installing and maintaining 5G technology. It is estimated that deploying the necessary infrastructure for 5G will create approximately 50,000 new construction jobs each year over the build-out period, and that is just for construction.

Right now, there simply aren't enough workers with the necessary training to meet the needs of nationwide 5G. Earlier this year, I introduced the Telecommunications Skilled Workforce Act. My bill would help to increase the number of workers enrolled in 5G training programs and identify ways to grow the telecommunications workforce to meet the demands of 5G.

The coronavirus has shown us the result of robust investment in 4G infrastructure and spectrum—strong networks that can handle steep surge in internet traffic. We need to make sure that we are putting in the necessary work and investment to ensure that our 5G networks are just as strong.

The 5G future is here. Let's make sure that the United States is ready.

CORONAVIRUS

Madam President, before we vote here in just a few minutes, I want to just make a couple of remarks with respect to coronavirus legislation. We have heard some of our colleagues on the Democrat side come down here and attack Republicans for not wanting to do more legislation and more spending, which is, as they know, completely not accurate. Republicans are prepared to do whatever it takes to help America recover from the coronavirus effects and to deal with the health emergency, which is why we have invested tens of billions of dollars in vaccines and antiviral therapeutics and testing—all the things that are necessary to get this healthcare crisis dealt with in a way that would allow Americans the confidence to get back out in the economy.

Secondly, dealing with the economic impacts, which have been many, the bills that we passed so far—we passed four—and the combined amount of the spending in those four bills are almost \$3 trillion. It is focused on families, getting direct assistance into the hands of American families. It is focused on workers, keeping workers employed. This Paycheck Protection Program has clearly been one that has allowed a lot of small businesses to continue to operate and to continue to keep their workers employed. It is focused on those who, through no fault of their own, have lost jobs, with a significant plus-up in unemployment insurance accounts, supported at the State level but significantly increased in terms of funding from the Federal Government.

Of course, as I said earlier, it is focused very directly on those healthcare professionals or healthcare workers on the frontlines, to make sure that they have PPE and ventilators, all the things not only to protect themselves but to care for the patients whom they are entrusted to care for. As I said before, investing heavily in those things will help us fight and win and beat the coronavirus—the vaccines, the antiviral therapeutics, and the testing. Those are all things that we have done already.

Now, what you saw last week was the House of Representatives blow into town for a 24-hour period to pass a massive \$3 trillion bill filled up with all kinds of goodies in a gift bag for special interest groups that they care about but that have little to do with addressing the fundamental challenges facing this country with respect to the coronavirus.

I would argue that not only do they not know what the need is but that many of the dollars we have already pushed out are still in the pipeline and haven't been used. We don't know what our State and local governments need in terms of revenue replacement, and we have lots of dollars that are still going out to hospitals, healthcare pro-

viders, and nursing homes, much of which hasn't been spent yet. Of course we have the Paycheck Protection Program, which we are burning through fairly quickly but hasn't run out of funding yet either. As I said, those are all the things—the almost \$3 trillion—that have been disbursed and distributed already to address this crisis.

What Democrats did last week in the House of Representatives is that they came in with a philosophical, ideological wish list—a fantasy, if you will—of all of the things they would like to get done, very few of which actually deal with the crisis at hand, so much so that their bill—1,800 pages long, \$3 trillion in new spending, again, without knowing what the effect is of dollars already spent or what the need is out there for additional spending—included things like funding for studies on diversity and inclusion in the marketing of cannabis. Is that really something that is relevant to fighting and battling the coronavirus? They included in there tax increases for small businesses. The one tax cut they included in their bill dramatically cuts taxes for millionaires and billionaires. In fact, 56 percent of that tax cut would go to the top 1 percent of wage earners in this country. Those are the types of things that were included in that bill. It really was an ideological wish list—nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else.

So for Democratic leaders to come down here and suggest for a minute that what the House did somehow ought to be something that the Senate contemplates or considers doing here is just completely missing the point of what the American people need in this crisis, and that is certainty. They need to know that we are dealing with the health emergency. They need to know that there is going to be support there for our small businesses, for our workers, for people who are unemployed, and for our families. They need to know that we are committed to seeing that we have the vaccines in place, the therapeutics in place that will enable us to fight and win this battle against the coronavirus. That is what we ought to be focused on, not this crazy wish list of things that the House, in a short amount of time—24 hours—came in here to vote on and, as I said earlier, much of which was focused on an agenda—a more permanent agenda—rather than the task at hand, which is addressing the crisis in front of us.

I hope my Democratic colleagues will work with us in a constructive way and in a bipartisan way to deal with the very real challenges that are being faced by the American people and not continue to come down here and advocate for an ideological wish list that, one, can't become law, and two, doesn't deal with the task at hand.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Anna M. Manasco, of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Joni Ernst, John Barrasso, Deb Fischer, John Cornyn, Roger F. Wicker, Roy Blunt, John Thune, Rob Portman, Shelley Moore Capito, Steve Daines, Lindsey Graham, Pat Roberts, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Richard Burr, Mike Crapo.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Anna M. Manasco, of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 72, nays 20, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 97 Ex.]

YEAS—72

Baldwin	Fischer	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Peters
Blackburn	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Reed
Boozman	Hassan	Risch
Braun	Hawley	Roberts
Capito	Hoeven	Romney
Cardin	Hyde-Smith	Rosen
Carper	Inhofe	Rubio
Casey	Johnson	Sasse
Cassidy	Jones	Scott (FL)
Collins	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Shaheen
Cortez Masto	King	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sinema
Cramer	Leahy	Smith
Crapo	Lee	Sullivan
Cruz	Loeffler	Tester
Daines	Manchin	Thune
Duckworth	McConnell	Tillis
Durbin	McSally	Toomey
Enzi	Moran	Warner
Ernst	Murphy	Wicker
Feinstein	Paul	Young

NAYS—20

Bennet	Coons	Hirono
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Klobuchar
Booker	Harris	Menendez
Cantwell	Heinrich	Merkley