

Our firefighters are out there now, putting their lives even more at a risk, putting themselves on the line to help their communities.

Police officers are answering calls without hesitation, despite the great risk that puts on them and their families when they go home.

So many of our other public servants are working diligently to keep our communities running, to keep our States strong to meet a crisis, and to try to help folks stay healthy and stay safe. Without hesitation, across New Jersey—across all of our 50 States—we are seeing more clearly the heroic actions of people who are leading in a time of crisis.

But as was said by my colleagues, across the country, States are being hit by significantly declining revenues and extraordinarily increasing costs. We are already seeing early projections, as discussed by my colleagues. Even independent rating agencies like Moody's are talking about hundreds of billions of dollars in deficits for our State and local governments.

My own Governor has estimated New Jersey's protracted gap caused by those declining revenues—those extremely rising costs—to be somewhere between \$20 and \$30 billion.

Due to these shortfalls, without immediate action from Congress, State and local governments will be forced to make deep cuts to public services, including laying off folks who are not just essential in word but who often make the difference between life and death, safety or crisis in our communities. These would be the workers who would be laid off at a time when we need them the most.

Not only do we need these vital public servants on the job, protecting our communities, educating our kids, and supporting our neighbors, but cuts like these actually will aggravate and deepen the overall economic crisis facing our country. Independent rating agencies and others say that cuts like these will actually prolong our economic crisis and the time needed for recovery. This is not the time for half measures. This is the time to act at the scale that the crisis demands.

The Federal Government needs to be providing a robust, accurately tailored response to this crisis by funding our State and local governments in a way that prioritizes those areas that have been hit the hardest. The SMART Act does exactly that. It is a bipartisan bill. It is thoughtful. It is tailored narrowly to fit this crisis.

The SMART Act is a commonsense approach that will make sure that the help is going to where it is needed most—to our hardest hit communities and States—and to help ensure that those workers whom we hail with our words—firefighters, police officers, and teachers—we support with our actions, as well, for they are out there right now supporting us.

No State should go bankrupt fighting this virus, because of this virus. No

State should go bankrupt because we in the Federal Government refuse to support them. No essential public worker should lose their job because of this crisis and because Congress was not stepping up to lead through it.

There is no time to waste. As was said by my colleague, we have folks in my State who are putting together their budgets right now. As we heard from my colleague from Louisiana, they are already accounting for the need to make cuts. We have already seen hundreds of thousands of public workers being laid off. The delay has costs, and when you are talking about first responders, the delays can have costs that are hard to imagine.

I encourage my colleagues to see this as what it is. It is an accurately tailored response. It is a bipartisan bill. It is what our Nation needs right now. I encourage my colleagues in the Senate to work to get this to the floor so that we can vote on it, pass it, and get it through Congress to the President's desk, so we can avoid the storm that we are in and, ultimately, overcome the severity of its ravages.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mrs. LOEFFLER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to complete my remarks before the 12:30 p.m. vote.

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

#### U.S.A. RISE

Mrs. LOEFFLER. Madam President, 8 weeks ago today, the Senate passed the CARES Act, an unprecedented \$2.2 trillion package of legislation aimed at providing relief as our country took steps to respond to the threat of COVID-19.

Previously, we passed legislation to expand free access to testing and paid leave, accelerate vaccines and treatments, and to support the Federal agencies leading our pandemic response.

The CARES Act was designed to support the health of our citizens and the economy. It included direct payments to American families, grants to hospitals, and the Paycheck Protection Program—forgivable loans to small businesses to keep their employees on the payroll. The program was so successful that a month later, Congress approved the additional \$310 billion for PPP loans, \$75 billion for hospitals, and \$25 billion for testing.

Georgia hospitals have received over \$1.7 billion, including at least \$328 million for our rural businesses under the CARES Act.

I worked to include provisions in the CARES Act to expand rural health and telehealth program. Our State has received more than \$800,000 from these programs. They are helping Georgians across our State stay connected with their doctors from the safety of their own homes.

In addition, our State and local governments have received \$5.8 billion to help schools adjust to online learning, to provide assistance for those who lost

their jobs or homes, to keep our airports running, and to help our communities respond and serve in this challenging moment.

The action Congress took has helped to meet immediate challenges, but it is clear the pandemic has caused significant human suffering and staggering economic losses.

In the last 2 months, I have heard from hundreds suffering the effects of this outbreak and the response: first responders, doctors, and nurses on the frontline, small business owners and farmers who have seen the viability of their businesses threatened, families who have suffered job losses, children who are out of school, and food banks that have seen an unprecedented surge in demand.

Before this pandemic, Americans were enjoying a thriving economy, with the lowest unemployment rate in 50 years. Under the leadership of the Trump administration, more families were on their way to living the American dream. Then, in late March, the day after the Senate passed the CARES Act, we learned that a record 3.3 million workers had applied for initial unemployment benefits in a single week. The total is now a staggering 36.5 million Americans who filed initial jobless claims. This is more than the combined populations of Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.

In my State, more than one in three Georgians have lost their jobs. Watching this unfold, despite the relief of the CARES Act, I recognize that it is time to look beyond the immediate response and to focus on our recovery. As a member of the President's Opening Up America Again Congressional Group, I am putting my nearly three decades of experience in building companies and creating jobs and opportunities to work for Georgians. With my experience and the conversations I have had with Georgians, I developed a U.S.A. Restoring and Igniting the Strength of Our Economy plan—or U.S.A. Rise—to bring back our thriving economy. The four pillars of the plan are Made in the U.S.A., Grown in the U.S.A., Hiring in the U.S.A., and Families in the U.S.A. I started to introduce legislative proposals based on this four-pillar framework that incentivize companies to invest in America, to grow jobs, and to help families.

I would like to highlight one of those pillars today, Families in the U.S.A.

First, we mourn the loss of those to COVID-19. The toll of this has devastated thousands of families. It is also clear that with economic damage comes societal damage. Our country needed to take dramatic actions to flatten the curve, but those steps meant most Americans were confined to their homes. This meant work from home, school from home, but also, in too many instances, lost jobs, isolation, depression, suicide, and domestic, substance, and child abuse.

It is timely that May is Mental Health Awareness Month. In a recent

Atlanta Journal-Constitution op-ed, Eve Byrd and Jennifer Olsen of the Cardinal Center wrote: "Isolation is one of the cruellest components of the outbreak."

Last week, I spoke with the head of a mental health treatment facility in Georgia. They are seeing a significant spike in those reaching out for help. The waitlist is growing, and the demand for help is rising rapidly. An emergency hotline run by the Substance Abuse and Mental Services Administration in HHS saw a 1,000-percent increase in calls in just 1 month. That was this April compared to last April.

I have spoken with local law enforcement officials who have seen a serious spike in domestic abuse calls. The nationwide Crisis Text Line has seen a 78-percent increase in texts related to domestic violence across our country.

The millions of Americans who have lost their jobs or their businesses are suffering.

Tiffany, a mother of three from College Park, GA, was furloughed from her steady job stocking store shelves. She said: "It is very overwhelming when you have rent, when you have children to take care of." When a parent loses their job, they lose much more. They lose their ability to put food on the table, to pay rent, and the uncertainty grows for children. It is vital to help families weather this crisis.

We know that Americans who have a steady paycheck are more likely to have stable, secure families, and children from stable families are more likely to do well in school. That is why I have designed the USA RISE Plan as an economic framework that takes the human cost of the coronavirus into account. Helping families and job creation today will allow parents to get back to work and reduce the fallout from this pandemic from permanently impacting an entire generation.

Importantly, this does not mean we should expand the grip of the Federal Government. An American Enterprise Institute report on achieving the American dream, released just a few weeks ago, states:

The power of community has become all the more poignant as we retreated more to isolated lives required by social distancing. Oftentimes, local institutions and neighborhoods have a greater influence on economic outcomes than what is occurring at the Federal level.

Being in Washington working on behalf of our State, I see that local impact firsthand. Often, these organizations are at the heart of our communities. It is where people turn for help, for a sense of belonging.

Churches and other nonprofits are doing amazing work during this very difficult time. They have been providing childcare, meals, and other support for family and children. For example, YMCAs are the largest provider of childcare in Georgia. Many have stepped up to provide childcare for essential workers. They are providing

thousands of meals each week to help out needy families.

That is why last week I introduced legislation, the Limiting Infant Fatality and Empowering Nonprofit Organization Workforces Act, or LIFE NOW Act. It allows larger nonprofits access to the Paycheck Protection Program loans. These loans will help them keep their doors open and continue to serve their communities while ensuring that no taxpayer dollars go to abortion providers.

Yesterday, I introduced the Working Families Childcare Access Act. This will give more working families more flexibility by allowing parents to contribute more to their employer-sponsored dependent care cafeteria flexible spending account, or FSA. If a family doesn't use all their funds in 1 year, any leftover funds can be rolled over to the following year. This will help families make plans for childcare as they begin to go back to work.

I am continuing to work on additional legislation to provide families with targeted relief—for example, a bill to codify the Trump administration regulations to help Americans who recently lost their jobs and their health insurance. The Trump administration expanded short-term, limited-duration health insurance plans after President Obama substantially restricted those plans just 2 months before he left office. These plans had previously been available for nearly 20 years. They are an affordable option for Americans who are in between jobs or who have been laid off.

The dramatic economic numbers alone do not convey the full cost of this pandemic—the futures impacted, the isolation, domestic abuse, substance abuse, and suicide. As our country begins to look forward amid the coronavirus pandemic, we must support job growth and families to build strong futures.

In the coming weeks, I will introduce additional bills as part of the USA RISE Plan aimed at incentivizing manufacturing in the United States, helping our farmers and small business owners, and to ensure that America is the best place in the world to do business.

While I continue to do all I can to fight COVID-19, I will also continue to do all I can to help Georgia families and employers recover and prosper.

I yield the floor.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant 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 John F. Heil III, of Oklahoma, to

be United States District Judge for the Northern, Eastern and Western Districts of Oklahoma.

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 John F. Heil III, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Northern, Eastern and Western Districts of Oklahoma, shall be brought to close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant 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 Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 76, nays 16, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 98 Ex.]

#### YEAS—76

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

#### NAYS—16

Blumenthal	Hirono	Schumer
Booker	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Brown	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cantwell	Merkley	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murray	
Harris	Schatz	