

am afraid the tumult will continue. It is my fervent hope that this Nation finds a way to peace soon.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, back in March, as the coronavirus pandemic began to grip our country, the Senate's historic CARES Act set up the Paycheck Protection Program to help protect American workers from layoffs during the crisis.

Thanks especially to its chief architects, Senator RUBIO and Senator COLLINS, the PPP has literally saved tens of millions of American jobs. Our colleagues' bold policy has meant the mailboxes of working families in all 50 States have continued to bring people their regular paychecks instead of pink slips.

Through the end of May, this remarkable program has delivered more than half a trillion dollars to keep American workers on payroll all across our country.

One recent survey found that more than three-quarters—three-quarters—of all small business owners have applied for a PPP loan and more than 90 percent of those applicants have received one.

The Senate has always committed to standing behind this popular program. Back in April when it ran low on funds, we worked together to add more resources, and today we are passing another piece of legislation that makes a few targeted changes to the program.

To help workers and small businesses through these lengthy shutdowns that are just now beginning to ease, we are increasing the loan forgiveness period from 8 weeks to 6 months.

Since keeping workers on payroll obviously requires small businesses to stay afloat in the first place, we are expanding firms' ability to use these funds to meet obligations like their rent, their mortgage, or their utility bills, but we maintain the overall requirement to avoid layoffs to keep the strong protection for workers in place. And we are providing payroll tax deferral for the small businesses involved.

This is a bipartisan bill that passed the House overwhelmingly. I am proud the Senate is sending it on to the President's desk to become law.

I want to thank Senator COLLINS and Senator RUBIO once more for their leadership in authoring this historic program in the first place. They have kept right on with their essential leadership, carefully monitoring the policy as it has taken effect.

I know they have identified further technical fixes in addition to the issues we are addressing today, and I hope and anticipate the full Congress will look at addressing those as well in the future.

I also want to thank Senator DAINES, Senator TILLIS, and Senator GARDNER for their hard work on these modifications.

The Senate delivered for workers and small businesses when we first passed the CARES Act. We delivered again when we added more money to this popular program back in April, and we are delivering again today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, this is a very good day because very much needed improvements to the PPP program will now pass the Senate as they passed the House, 417 to 1. The PPP program is desperately needed by small business, and it was not in the original proposal of our Republican friends or of the President. We worked very hard and pushed hard to get this done, and I want to salute Senators CARDIN and SHAHEEN for their efforts.

The program was not at all perfect. When it first rolled out, too many of the big shots got money and not enough of the small businesses—the mom and pops, the butcher, baker, and candlestick maker. And nonprofits were not entitled. I pushed very hard to get nonprofits, including church-related nonprofits, religious-related nonprofits, in the bill. They can now benefit from the bill just like the small businesses can.

We Democrats said, there has to be some money set aside—not just to give more money in COVID 3.5—to the existing businesses that had connections with bankers but to the smaller businesses, and \$125 billion was set aside. That was a very good thing. Now it has changed from a program that has gone mainly to those that had good connections to bankers that were well connected to many smaller businesses as well.

In the second round, States that really needed the help got a greater percentage of the help, like my State of New York. So this program has been one that Democrats have been, initially, very positive about and helped propose and write but constantly worked on improving to make it better, better, and better. That improvement continues today. The House Democrats put together a bill that would deal with the kinds of problems we continue to see.

Eight weeks is running out soon. Yet small businesses may not get all the money—may not be able to use the money when the program runs out, and extending it to 24 weeks is vital. In many States, like mine in New York, only 25 percent of the money could go to OTSPS expenses, other than personnel expenses. That wasn't enough. A lot of businesses didn't want to apply.

This bill moves it up to 40. Our Republican friends had resisted that. I am glad now they have seen the light.

You will have the loan—if you go to convert your loans and get them forgiven, it will be 5 years that you have to pay back, not 2. Lots of small businesses said they couldn't dare be able to pay them back in 2. These are among the most important changes in the bill, as well as some others.

I am glad our Republican friends have relented and passed the bill here as we are about to close session for this week. It passed the House. We Democrats have been pushing to get it done. For the last 3 days, there were some problems on the other side, and I am glad they have been worked out. I want to thank Senator JOHNSON. He had problems, but we talked on the phone repeatedly and worked those problems out with the help of Senator CARDIN. And this is an improvement that is much needed and comes at the last minute but not too late. So many businesses—8 weeks—will expire so soon, and now it is extended to 24 weeks.

So I am glad this bill passes. I am glad we can do it by unanimous consent. We Democrats are fully in support of this, every Democrat. We have no problems moving it forward. I know it will help a lot of small businesses.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM FLEXIBILITY ACT OF 2020

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 7010, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 7010) to amend the Small Business Act and the CARES Act to modify certain provisions related to the forgiveness of loans under the paycheck protection program, to allow recipients of loan forgiveness under the paycheck protection program to defer payroll taxes, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I appreciate the good faith efforts of Senator JOHNSON to make sure the terms of the program and its legislative intent are properly understood. In addition, I commend his leadership in looking at the program overall, and making suggestions about reforms should Congress determine that additional money is needed in the future for the program. The program was designed intentionally to get money into the hands of small businesses quickly as government took the extraordinary and unprecedented step of shutting down the economy because of the pandemic. However, should we need to replenish the fund, he is absolutely correct that we should ensure that money

flows to small businesses and enterprises that truly need it. I look forward to working with him and our colleagues on reforms to the program should Congress make the decision to extend it.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the letter I send to the desk be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CONGRESSIONAL INTENT FOR H.R. 7010

We, the undersigned Members of Congress, would like to clarify the congressional intent for H.R. 7010, the Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act of 2020. The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) was authorized by Congress under the CARES Act as a short-term solution to help businesses make ends meet and continue to pay their employees during the initial shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the CARES Act, authorized funds for the program are set to expire on June 30, 2020, allowing for no new loans to be issued after this date.

H.R. 7010 amends the CARES Act to provide businesses with greater flexibility for their use of PPP loans. Section 3(a) of H.R. 7010 changes the definition of the "covered period" defined by section 1102(a) of the CARES Act to be from February 15, 2020 to December 31, 2020 instead of from February 15, 2020 to June 30, 2020, as under current law. We wish to clarify the congressional intent of this extension of the covered period to December 31, 2020, and our expectations about how the amended program will operate.

The CARES Act requires that PPP loans may only be spent on allowable uses during the covered period. In addition to the uses otherwise allowed by section 7(a) of the Small Business Act, the CARES Act authorizes as allowable uses "payroll costs; costs related to the continuation of group health care benefits during periods of paid sick, medical, or family leave, and insurance premiums; employee salaries, commissions, or similar compensations; payments of interest on any mortgage obligation (which shall not include any prepayment of or payment of principal on a mortgage obligation); rent (including rent under a lease agreement); utilities; and interest on any other debt obligations that were incurred before the covered period." The intention of the extension of the covered period in H.R. 7010 is to allow borrowers who received PPP loans before June 30, 2020 to continue to make expenditures for allowable uses until December 31, 2020. The extension of the covered period does not authorize the Small Business Administration (SBA) to issue any new PPP loans after June 30, 2020, as this date remains fixed by section 1102(b) of the CARES Act.

The extension of the covered period defined in section 1102(a) of the CARES Act should not be construed so as to permit the SBA to continue accepting applications for loans after June 30, 2020. Our intent and understanding of the law is that, consistent with the CARES Act as amended by H.R. 7010, when the authorization of funds to guarantee new PPP loans expires on June 30, 2020, the SBA and participating lenders will stop accepting and approving applications for PPP loans, regardless of whether the commitment level enacted by the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act has been reached.

MIKE LEE,
United States Senator.
MARCO RUBIO,

United States Senator.
DEAN PHILLIPS,
Member of Congress.
RON JOHNSON,
United States Senator.
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
United States Senator.
CHIP ROY,
Member of Congress.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (H.R. 7010) was passed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the cloture motion with respect to the Pack nomination ripen at 11:40 a.m. tomorrow, with 20 minutes of debate under the control of Senator MENENDEZ prior to the vote; I further ask that if cloture is invoked on the Pack nomination, the postcloture time expire at 1:30 p.m. tomorrow; finally, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

TRIBUTE TO PIA CORONA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there are so many critical jobs that go on around the Capitol that may not always get the spotlight or appreciation they deserve.

Today, I would like to mention one such amazing person, Pia Corona, or as she is affectionately known, Ms. Pia.

You see, Pia is a teacher at the Senate Employees Childcare Center, a caring, nurturing, and deeply special component of the Senate community.

Six years ago, on the 30th anniversary of the center, then-Senator Tom Harkin described the teachers and administrators at the center as, "some of the unsung heroes of the Senate."

I couldn't agree more, and it is a privilege to pay special tribute today to one of those unsung heroes.

This month marks Pia's 25 year anniversary teaching at the center, a mon-

umental accomplishment that has allowed her the opportunity to have a lasting impact on countless young lives.

A number of children of my staff were fortunate to have Ms. Pia as a teacher and cannot say enough wonderful things about her, so much so that they still keep in touch and bring their children by to visit years after leaving the center. Elle, Oliver and Leo, just three of many examples, still recognize Ms. Pia as an impactful figure in their early lives and in their education.

Pia, a stalwart New York Yankees fan, started at the Senate Employees Childcare Center in May 1995, always working in the pre-kindergarten class to help children prepare for the big jump to elementary school kindergarten. Over the last two and half decades, she taught more than 400 children, including many siblings.

Ms. Pia has a unique understanding of how each child learns differently and loving ability to meet those individual needs at such a tender and formative age. Not surprisingly, she is described by her colleagues as a walking encyclopedia of knowledge on child development, and her classroom lessons and caring style reflect these incredible talents.

One of her special field trips was a walk over to the late Senator John Glenn's office when her students were studying space. A picture of this outing still hangs at the center.

Pia also helped organize a visit to this very Senate floor for her class. They listened patiently as the Secretary of the Senate gave her own pre-K version of School House Rock. It was, without a doubt, the most well-behaved gathering that the Senate floor has seen in years.

Pia makes such an impression on children that many of her former students still reach out to her, including one recent college graduate who wanted to say thank you all these years later. I know children of some of my staff have returned to the center to read to Ms. Pia's students during storytime.

As we struggle with the coronavirus pandemic, we have all been reminded once again of the critical importance of our teachers and schools. Ms. Pia's students certainly knew that was the case from their time in her class.

We all remember a teacher or two who made a lasting impact on our lives growing up—challenging us, inspiring us, nurturing us. Ms. Pia will surely be one that many remember as just such a special teacher.

I congratulate Pia Corona on her notable anniversary and deeply meaningful contribution to the Senate community. Our country and our world need good news and kindness right now. Simply put, that is Ms. Pia.