

the Senate, Kentucky was the only State without its own national wildlife refuge. We had plenty of history and heritage. We just needed a little help to preserve it.

With the support of hunters, boaters, and outdoorsmen in the Jackson Purchase region, I led the establishment of the Clarks River National Wildlife Refuge. It was a huge step to protect local species and our treasured Kentucky pastimes. This refuge has continued to grow over the years. Thanks to the Land and Water Conservation Fund and many willing sellers, it now makes thousands of acres available for appreciation, recreation, and tourism.

Like many public lands, these wildlife areas make great neighbors. In a single year, more than 50 million visitors come to America's wildlife refuges nationwide and spend billions in nearby communities.

Decades later, another Kentucky community was looking to safeguard its own natural treasure. The Green River, which flows through Kentucky and meets the Ohio River near Henderson County, is one of the most biodiverse waterways on the entire continent. I was proud to take the lead once again, and alongside strong local supporters and a broad coalition of groups, we sent a bill to President Trump, and he signed it into law. We welcomed the Interior Secretary to Western Kentucky last year to cut the ribbon on the Green River National Wildlife Refuge.

But Kentuckians know that ribbon cuttings are just the beginning. Our State has newly designated public lands that need attention to get off the ground. We have well-established public lands that have opportunities to grow and improve, and we have places like the Daniel Boone National Forest, established more than 80 years ago, that need our careful attention and upkeep.

This legislation before the Senate will help all of them. It will help us repair levees at the Clarks River National Wildlife Refuge. It will also help our two wildlife refuges continue to grow. It will help Mill Springs Battlefield and Camp Nelson continue to teach the history of emancipation and the Civil War to new generations. It will help us make infrastructure upgrades at Mammoth Cave National Park for the safety of 2 million annual visitors. It will help enhance the Land Between the Lakes and its \$600 million economic impact. It will fund transportation and structural maintenance in the Daniel Boone National Forest, which supports more than 900 jobs. It will help us rehabilitate the Cumberland Gap and give future Americans the opportunity to literally follow in the footsteps of our early explorers.

Kentucky is proud of our public lands. We are proud of the role our natural inheritance plays in our vibrant present and our promising future. Of course, we are only just one State. Every one of my Senate colleagues has

parks, forests, refuges, and historic sites they are equally proud of that are equally central in their communities. That is why we voted to advance this legislation earlier this week by an overwhelming bipartisan margin.

President Teddy Roosevelt once said this about our Nation's national treasures: "We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage people ever received, and each one must do his part if we wish to show that the Nation is worthy of its good fortune."

I want to thank Senator DAINES and Senator GARDNER for their leadership in making sure that we keep up our end of the bargain with the generations of Americans who came before us and those yet to come. I am also grateful for Senator ALEXANDER, Senator PORTMAN, and our Democratic colleagues, Senators MANCHIN and WARNER, for helping to assemble this bipartisan bill. I will be proud to speak for Kentucky and to vote for it.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

JUSTICE IN POLICING ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery catapulted the issues of racial justice, police violence, and systemic racism to the forefront of this Nation's conscience. These issues are not new. Some are even older than the Nation itself. The anger felt by hundreds of thousands of protestors is about that historical and pervasive injustice. It is rooted in our decades-long failure to reform police departments and the yawning gap between our ideal of equal justice under law and the reality of equal justice for only some.

America is an experiment. The Founding Fathers said that. We know it deep in our bones. An experiment means you can change, and some of the best observers of the difference—I think de Tocqueville was one of these—of America and the difference between us and other countries—we are willing to change.

I am touched and moved—I was with the demonstrators on Saturday in New York, in Brooklyn—by how many people were there—great diversity—and how many were young and idealistic and doing things for just the right reasons—not selfish reasons but for the betterment of the country, to make us a more perfect union.

We must seize this moment. We cannot let it pass. This isn't about simply

renewing a national dialogue, although dialogue is always important. It is about action. It is about making real and meaningful progress. And the way to do that is with comprehensive police reform legislation in Congress.

House and Senate Democrats have already drafted legislation that would ban the use of choke holds and other tactics that have taken the lives of Black Americans like George Floyd and Eric Garner; that would also ban the use of no-knock warrants in drug cases, which is one of the reasons for the death of Breonna Taylor; that would limit the transfer of military equipment to police departments; and, crucially, that would make it easier to hold police accountable for misconduct, as well as institute several reforms to prevent that misconduct in the first place.

The moment does not call for cherry-picking one or two things to do; it calls for bold, broad change—whole-scale reform, not piecemeal reform. I know the inclination of some of my Senate colleagues would be to cherry-pick a few small improvements and say the job is done. It will not be. We need to start—start—with the Justice in Policing Act, a strong, comprehensive bill that people, particularly Senators BOOKER and HARRIS, the CBC, spent a lot of time with experts who have studied this issue for many, many months and years.

For too long, when major issues wash over the country, the waves of change and progress crash against the rocks of a disinterested Republican Senate majority.

When Americans watched in horror as another spate of mass shootings rocked the Nation, they rose up and demanded change. President Trump and Senate Republicans initially tried to make the right noises. Leader MCCONNELL promised that a debate on expanding background checks would be "front and center" in the Senate after shootings in Dayton and El Paso, but, predictably, that debate never came to pass.

That seems to be the M.O. of our Republican friends. When there is a national crisis, major issues, people in the streets worried and concerned and wanting change, we hear words, and then the strategy is delay and, at the end, do nothing. We cannot go through these same motions again.

This is about the original sin of America that we must try to deal with head-on. There are Americans in the streets, shouting at the top of their lungs for change, young people, idealistic people—the best of America. The Senate must pursue comprehensive reform, not the lowest common denominator and certainly not more empty rhetorical resolutions.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Of course, there is another crisis in the country crying out for action and leadership.

The COVID-19 pandemic didn't go away while the Nation rightfully turned its eyes to issues of racial justice.

Yesterday, the United States eclipsed 2 million cases of coronavirus. Another 1.5 million Americans filed for unemployment this week. Federal Reserve officials—sober, nonpolitical—are predicting that, best case, we will end the year around 10 percent unemployment—a staggering figure. One out of every 10.

The disease is spiking in a number of States around the country. Arizona officials have warned that its hospitals could be filled by next month. Texas has gone 3 straight days with record numbers of hospitalizations. North Carolina, New Mexico, California, Oregon, and several other States are experiencing a resurgence or peak levels of COVID-19.

As the President continues to fixate on the stock market and Senate Republicans are prematurely ready to declare victory, we need to wrest the focus back to these crucial issues. So today I am requesting that Dr. Fauci and Dr. Birx and other members of the administration's Coronavirus Task Force conduct a briefing for Democratic Senators on the recent spikes and do it next week. We need to understand why these spikes are happening and how to adapt our national response.

The President—always interested in himself, not in the good of the country—was too quick to sideline the Coronavirus Task Force, too eager to pretend that everything was back to normal and better than ever. The country needs Dr. Fauci on billboards, but the President wants to put him on a milk carton.

The Vice President yesterday was photographed with campaign staffers in a tight space, no social distancing, without anyone wearing a mask. The very least the administration could do is lead by example and often cannot even manage that much.

At the same time, we cannot forget that the issues of racial justice and COVID-19 are intricately related. The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately kills Black Americans. Communities of color have less access to quality healthcare, greater food insecurity, greater percentages of poverty, and a disproportionate number of our front-line essential workers—41.2 percent—are African American and Latino. The majority of African Americans are renters and dedicate more than 50 percent of their income to rent.

The truth is, an emergency bill on COVID-19 is a racial justice issue too. Hazard pay for essential workers is a racial justice issue too. Healthcare is a racial justice issue too. Rent assistance and forbearance from eviction is a racial justice issue too. These are all items that must be discussed in another COVID relief bill, and it is past time to get to work.

African Americans, Latinos, and other minorities are taking the eco-

nomic hit from the coronavirus on the chin, but Senate Republicans, led by Leader MCCONNELL, are reportedly unwilling to consider another emergency relief bill until late July. How many more workers will lose their jobs between now and late July? How many renters will be kicked out of their homes between now and late July? How many State and local government workers will lose their jobs, as State and local governments meet their budget deadlines on July 1 and don't have the dollars to deal with them? How many of them will lose their jobs? Waiting until late July is callous, it is cold, and it is wrong for our economy.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the Republican majority seems to have a whole lot of time to push rightwing judges. That is what they want to do next week. And both of the judges that they nominate—to show the hypocrisy of those who talk about wanting to help and compare it to their actions, both of those judges have an antipathy to our healthcare law. In the middle of a public healthcare crisis, the Republican majority thinks they can get away with stuff like this, but they can't. Americans are catching on. One of the nominees, Cory Wilson, has an alarming record on voting rights in the middle of a national reckoning on racial injustice, and you are all going to vote for him? This guy has opposed voting rights, and you are going to vote for him. They oppose healthcare. You are going to vote for them. And then they are going to give nice speeches on how they want equality. The two have to add up together.

ELECTION SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. The Republican majority also seems to have time to chase all of President Trump's wild conspiracy theories about how he was wronged by law enforcement—the poor, beleaguered President Trump. My goodness. That is what is happening in Judiciary today. Republican Majority Leader MCCONNELL can devote time to that, but they can't commit to time on the floor about how Black Americans are being wronged by law enforcement.

In order to bring a small appearance of fairness to this ridiculous Judiciary Committee vote today, Democrats will be requesting subpoenas for Trump campaign associates like Michael Cohen, Rick Gates, George Papadopoulos, and Michael Flynn, among others. These men have at one time or another pled guilty to offenses related to Putin's interference in the election. Let's hear what they have to say, or should this be just a one-sided kangaroo court to please President Trump?

If the Republican conspiracy caucus wants to waste the Senate's time dredging up old conspiracy theories about the previous election, let's at

least get the straight story. Let's at least hear witnesses who might have something different to say. This is not a dictatorship. This is not how courts or hearings are supposed to work, I would say to the Republican chairman, and it is beneath his dignity and the dignity of the body to conduct such sham, kangaroo court hearings.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BARRASSO). Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

TAXPAYER FIRST ACT OF 2019— Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1957, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1957) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modernize and improve the Internal Revenue Service, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell (for Gardner) amendment No. 1617, in the nature of a substitute.

McConnell amendment No. 1626 (to amendment No. 1617), to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 1627 (to amendment No. 1626), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 1628 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 1617), to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 1629 (to amendment No. 1628), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with instructions, McConnell amendment No. 1630, to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 1631 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 1630), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 1632 (to amendment No. 1631), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

(The remarks of Mr. THUNE pertaining to the introduction of S. 3938 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. THUNE. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

PROTESTS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, it has been 17 days since Minneapolis police murdered George Floyd; 90 days since police in Louisville, KY, killed Breonna Taylor, who would have turned 27 just days ago; and 109 days since Ahmaud Arbery was killed by