

fight the coronavirus and to mitigate its impact on American families, schools, and businesses. I want to briefly highlight some of the main provisions. They have probably been talked about already this afternoon.

First, \$6 billion goes for States to ramp up testing, with a particular emphasis on schools, employers, childcare facilities, and nursing homes.

Second, \$26 billion goes for the development and distribution of vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics. We have made meaningful progress on each of these fronts, but we haven't gotten there yet, as we all know.

Third, there is \$105 billion for the Education Stabilization Fund to help schools adapt to the circumstances they face, which are extraordinary. The CDC has emphasized the importance of getting kids back into school and has issued guidelines on how to do so safely. That is why this legislation provides additional funding for K-12 schools to get kids back into the classroom at least 50 percent of the time, which would be a big start. We recognize they will incur additional expense if they reopen safely, and we have to try to provide for that.

The fourth point I want to highlight briefly here is \$20 billion in additional assistance for our Nation's farmers and our ranchers.

The fifth and final point: nearly \$30 billion to bolster the U.S. defense industrial base, which is important to all of us. We must never take our eyes off the ball there. These resources will prevent furloughs of thousands of employees from across the country who help Americans stay safe.

I can go on and on, but time is moving on here this afternoon. We realize this is just the first step. We have to work together. We have to work in a bipartisan fashion here and put America first.

We know the House has some high numbers. We have good numbers, I believe. I look forward to some bipartisan help on this and moving these bills along.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank Senator WYDEN for his courtesy in allowing me to go next. I will be succinct.

The way to get back to work and back to school is to put politics aside and work together, as we have been doing, on the COVID-19 response and see whether we can get a result for the American people in the next couple of weeks.

The part of the Safely Back to Work and Back to School Act that I am introducing today does four things.

First, if you are one of 43 million Americans with a student loan, it helps you manage your debt. This is the way it does it: If you have no income, you have no monthly payment. If you remember, in March, we said to the 43 million Americans with student debt:

You can defer your payment until October 1. Well, that is just around the corner. What we would propose is, you don't have to pay it after October 1 if you have no income. If you do have income, your monthly payment will never be more than 10 percent of your income after deducting the necessities of life, such as rent, mortgage, or food.

No. 2, if you are a parent, this bill gives your child more choices of schools, provides scholarships so that your child can return to the private school he or she attended before the pandemic, and gives other students a new opportunity to attend private school. Senator TIM SCOTT introduced that legislation earlier. I am a cosponsor.

No. 3, if you are a working mom or dad, it helps you find childcare so you can go back to work. A lot of our childcare centers operate on a very thin margin. They have reduced revenue because they don't have as many clients these days. Senator BLUNT's bill and Senator SHELBY's appropriations bill will provide money so that they can stay open and provide safe environments to two-thirds of the children in the United States under age 6 who have parents in the workforce.

Finally, our bill—the part I am introducing—improves the Strategic National Stockpile so that we can maintain adequate supplies of masks, gloves, protective equipment, as well as onshore manufacturing capacity for tests, treatments, and vaccines that we are building now. We want to make sure that it doesn't go away and we have to rely on other countries in other parts of the world.

This legislation is about children, jobs, and healthcare.

As far as schools go, there are 100,000 public schools and 35,000 private schools in our country. There are about 5 million students in the private schools and 50 million in the public schools. Every one of those children is a treasure. I have worked with Senator BLUNT to help the country's 135,000 schools and 6,000 colleges have the money they need to open with as many students physically present as is consistent with safety.

The Safely Back to Work and Back to School Act poses making \$70 billion available for schools; another \$30 billion for colleges. That means roughly \$1,200 per student for public and private schools across the country. One-third of the money would be distributed automatically to all 135,000 schools. That is probably about \$400 a student—a significant amount of money. Two-thirds of the money would go to schools that are opening with students physically present to help pay for the extra costs of providing that instruction in a safe environment. If they are trying to open with students physically present, it makes logical sense to say that if they have to have more buses, if they have to hire more teachers, if they have to have more protective equipment, then those schools need more help paying for that.

There will be more funding, as Senator SHELBY mentioned, to help contain this sneaky, dangerous virus and give Americans more opportunity for access to healthcare. There is more funding in this overall legislation for testing, for the National Institutes of Health, community health centers, the distribution of vaccines, and to extend the expansion of teleservice activities that has happened during the pandemic.

This legislation reflects our Nation's priorities, which are safely back to school, safely back to childcare, and safely back to work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following the remarks of my Republican colleagues, Senators BROWN, MURPHY, and I be permitted to speak for up to 7 minutes each and that the previously scheduled votes occur following the remarks of those listed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, it is my pleasure to introduce the Restoring Critical Supply Chains and Intellectual Property Act.

China looms large in this debate about the coronavirus. That is where the virus originated. The lying and deceptive behavior of the Chinese Communist Party has brought this pandemic to the world. It is the third pandemic to come out of China. I think it is now time for us to get serious about our dependency on China.

What does this legislation do? It has four components.

The protective equipment that our nurses and doctors and all healthcare workers use to protect themselves on the frontlines—90 percent of it is made in China. We are going to try to bring it back home. We have a "Buy American" requirement in this bill—a \$7.5 billion tax credit to reenergize American production of PPE equipment.

We are trying to get PPE under the Berry amendment of the Defense bill. We require our uniforms for our military to be made in America to the extent possible. We are going to try to create PPE in the same category as a national security item.

There will be a \$7.5 billion tax credit to jump-start this industry. A lot of good jobs will come from this, and we will be less dependent on China when it comes to protective equipment.

I will discuss Senator PORTMAN's legislation, Safeguarding American Innovation Act, which is included, Senator CORNYN's CHIPS for America Act, and Senator MURKOWSKI's American Mineral Security Act very quickly.

Senator CORNYN's CHIPS for America Act creates tax incentives to return and grow a domestic semiconductor industry. A Taiwanese firm made a big

decision to come to America—I think in Texas—a Taiwanese semiconductor company. We are trying to incentivize their relocation into the United States and jump-start a semiconductor industry that has left the country. It is very important for the future of our economy.

Senator PORTMAN's Safeguarding American Innovation Act creates a Federal research council and institutes penalties for bad actors who come to the United States or are here to steal important intellectual property. I think we all know who we are talking about here. China leads the pack there, and you saw what happened in Houston.

Senator MURKOWSKI's American Mineral Security Act promotes secure and robust domestic supply chains of critical minerals by streamlining the permitting process for extraction and emphasizing R&D into critical mineral recycling and development.

These four things together will protect our supply chain. It will bring it back to the country at a time when we need to have more say about our destiny. The pandemic has been a wake-up call all over the board. There is nothing more important to me than relocating the medical supply chain and protecting the innovation that we are known for as a country.

With that, I yield.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, Senate Republicans and the White House have finally come forward with an unemployment insurance proposal. The Republican proposal is not just misguided; the Republican proposal is a punch in the gut and a slap in the face for the 30 million Americans relying on lifeline unemployment insurance benefits. It adds insult to infection.

Unemployment benefits—the ones we developed that ensure that people can pay the rent or buy groceries—are already expiring. The last payments went out Saturday. Senate Republicans and Donald Trump sat on their hands for months instead of working with Democrats, so now it appears that a lapse in benefits is inevitable.

Republicans apparently have a proposal that is just unworkable. You don't have to take my word for it; the nonpartisan experts who run the State workforce agencies have told the Finance Committee that any changes, even simple ones, can take months to implement. Now Republicans are talking about cutting those lifeline benefits—the ones that actually made it possible for folks to make rent and buy groceries and cover the cost of medicine and car insurance. They are talking about cutting those benefits by two-thirds. They want States to make complicated changes to the unemployment insurance program that could hold up benefits until 2021. Some States are indicating that it is almost impossible to manage this altogether.

The Republican proposal is cruel. In my view, it is legislative malpractice.

For the life of me, I don't know how anyone could possibly look at the state of our economy and decide that what is needed is even more economic pain for 30 million Americans. It is especially insulting to America's unemployed workers that Republicans want to cut their economic lifeline in the same bill that is going to give a taxpayer subsidy to power lunches for lobbyists.

My colleagues have been warned that State unemployment systems are already struggling to keep up. Some people who were laid off months ago are still waiting to receive benefits. I read about one today who is following all of this from their hospital bed, where they are suffering from COVID-19. There are news reports about people sleeping in their cars just to have a shot at being at the head of the line at the workforce agency.

Now Senate Republicans come forward with a proposal that throws even more sand in the gears. They have been warned that this kind of proposal will be a disaster to implement. I know because I was in the Senate Finance room when they were told about it.

My colleagues on the other side also are arguing that the biggest problem in America now is that there are all these lazy workers sitting at home collecting unemployment checks instead of going back to their jobs. There is no evidence—not a shred—that this is happening in large numbers around the country. Come to me with one single story about somebody turning down work, and I will tell you about a dozen out-of-work Oregonians I have spoken to, folks who cannot wait—cannot wait—to get back to work, Oregonians and Americans who believe in the dignity of work.

There was a nationwide townhall meeting on Thursday last, with people who were unemployed, and people who were unemployed volunteered that, if they were told in the evening that they could work the next day, they would be there at the crack of dawn. It is insulting to American workers to suggest they are a bunch of lazy freeloaders looking for a handout, but we have been hearing that time and again from those on the other side of the aisle who were simply unwilling to write any proposal at all.

I believe the Republican proposal is also a prescription for disaster for our economy. Supercharged unemployment benefits may be the single most impactful program that Congress passed in response to the pandemic. What does it mean to cut it? The Republican plan cuts unemployment benefits by more than \$10 billion per week. That opens up a terrible economic wound. It will be a huge setback right when the recovery seems to be stalling, even going in reverse.

One new analysis says cutting benefits down to \$200 per week is going to lead to a loss of 3.4 million jobs. And Senate Republicans want Americans to believe that it is unemployed workers holding back the economy.

I will close by saying it is long past time for my Republican colleagues to get serious about working with Democrats on a proposal that has a pathway to actually becoming law and to helping people. This Republican plan doesn't do that.

Just as I said on Thursday, we have been ready for months. The other body, the House of Representatives, passed a bill 2 months ago ensuring that Americans have those funds to make rent, pay groceries, and pay for essentials. Leader SCHUMER and I introduced our plan: the American Workforce Rescue Act.

So we were all set over here to go to work with Republicans before the majority leader sent everybody home on a 2-week recess, when we thought it was important to be here and to work on these crucial economic issues I have mentioned.

Benefits have lapsed. Tens of millions of Americans now walk an economic tightrope every single week, balancing the rent bill against the food bill, the food bill against healthcare costs.

There is no time to waste. Senate Republicans need to work with us now on a proposal that ensures that Americans do not face yet another economic hit, as I mentioned, with some of them actually sitting in hospitals suffering from COVID-19 and wondering how they are going to pay the bills.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, Senator WYDEN is so right here. He fought back in March for \$600 a week for unemployed workers, which kept our economy going, which kept us from going into a worse recession, which made all the difference in the world for all these workers.

Think about this. If we were to adopt their proposal—I think they have a proposal. We haven't really seen very much yet.

As Senator WYDEN said, the House passed a bill back in May. It has been May, June, and almost all of July. We have waited and waited and waited.

Unemployed workers know that their unemployment expires at the end of July, yet Senator MCCONNELL sent us home, as Senator WYDEN said. They wait. We wait. We wait. Then they come up with this half-baked proposal that they don't even know what it is exactly.

But we do know one thing. We do know that workers who were laid off through no fault of their own, they want to work. Most Americans want to work. Those workers, their unemployment is cut from \$600 to \$200 a week. So we are essentially taking \$400 from millions of workers in Connecticut and Pennsylvania, West Virginia, New York, Oregon, Ohio, Arkansas, and Utah. We are taking \$400 a week from these workers at the same time that the moratorium on eviction expires, at the same time that eviction courts in the States open up.

In Columbus, OH—my State's largest city—they are holding eviction courts in an arena because there are so many people who will be evicted if their unemployment expires. In the middle of a pandemic, we are going to evict people, and they are going to go to overcrowded homeless shelters; they are going to go to sleep in their cousins' basements—in the middle of a pandemic. What is that going to do?

I know the President just doesn't think much about the pandemic. He has moved on to accusing who knows what, calling names, dividing and all that, and isn't paying much attention to this pandemic. But, in the middle of a pandemic, to cut unemployment is just unbelievable.

We know that, in their plan, there is a major cut in unemployment benefits; there is no rental assistance that will help people pay their rent; there is no expansion of the eviction moratorium. There is nothing.

Senator MCCONNELL has had months to extend expanded unemployment benefits. He has had months to figure out what we are going to do on evictions. Yet nothing. I don't know, when I look down that hall—I don't really know—I see lobbyists running out of there, asking Senator MCCONNELL to get what they get, and they do very well every time, apparently.

Americans want to go back to work. People want to go to work, but they want to go back to work when it is safe. I want our schools to open, but I want our schools to open safely.

President Trump, months into this pandemic, still has no plans to protect workers. There is one reason people are still out of work: President Trump's failure to get this pandemic under control.

Now, as they suggest we drop unemployment from \$600 to \$200—it is not alarmist—people can lose their homes. A wave of evictions in the middle of this pandemic will set back millions of families.

I know it is not something that Senators do very often, but try to put yourself in the shoes of someone who is laid off in Akron, OH, or in Eugene, OR, or in Hartford, CT. Someone is laid off. They get that \$600. They can stay in their apartments—barely, but they can.

They are paying attention—sort of—to what we do here. They do know that their unemployment expires at the end of July. Then they hear of no plan.

The Democrats have said: Let's extend the unemployment. Let's do protections. Let's do emergency rental assistance. Let's help our schools. Let's help our local governments. Let's make sure people have enough food on their tables.

They hear nothing from the majority party, and people are now beginning to understand that maybe the Senate is not going to do its job, maybe the President really doesn't care about these unemployment benefits.

Think about the anxiety a family faces, the uncertainty of: Is my unem-

ployment going to be there? Am I going to be able to stay in my apartment? What am I going to do? How am I going to feed my kids? What is going to happen with schools? We don't know if they are going to be protected, if my kids are going to be safe at school.

Essentially, the Trump-McConnell plan tells people: You are on your own.

It is time that we, as a body—it is time that the Republicans work with Speaker PELOSI, work with us, that the President pays attention for a moment, and we actually take care of people in their homes; we take care of workers; we take care of people in our schools—instead of turning our backs.

It is time to help families stay in their homes. It is time to get people the help they need through this pandemic. It is time that this body lead when the President has failed.

Their plans don't come close to being enough.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, when people talk about this body being fundamentally broken under Republican leadership, this is exhibit A. This is exhibit A.

This body has had 2 months to consider legislation that would stand up a national effort to squash this pandemic once and for all and to make sure that people don't die, don't go hungry, don't get pushed out into the street at a moment when unemployment is higher than at any time in this country's history since the Great Depression.

We didn't consider any legislation for all of the last work period. We went on recess for 2 weeks. Now we are 3 days before unemployment benefits expire—the additional unemployment benefits—and we are now getting the introduction of what appears to be a dozen different pieces of legislation from Senate Republicans tonight.

We still don't have the details, but it looks as though there is not one bill being introduced but that there are about 13 bills being introduced. We don't have enough time before the expiration of unemployment benefits to negotiate 1 bill—1 bill—never mind 7 or 10.

We wasted months of time when Democrats and Republicans should have been talking together. Instead, Senate Republicans were talking amongst themselves and have now waited until the zero hour to come out with a piece of legislation which calls for a \$400-per-week cut in unemployment benefits for people who are out of work.

That is the economic stimulus plan: a \$400-per-week cut for families in this country who have been relying on unemployment benefits because the economy is not coming back.

But I come to this floor tonight to tell you why the economy is not coming back. It is not because we haven't appropriated enough money. It is because we are losing the fight against

the virus. In 15 days, this country has gone from 3 million cases to 4 million cases, and there is not enough funding in these proposals that were just outlined in order to help States beat the virus.

We are, once again, experiencing a PPE shortage in this Nation. Doctors at Memorial City Medical Center in Houston are using single-use N95 respirator masks for 15 days before throwing them out.

Schools are, right now, planning to spend \$25 billion in order to buy masks and cleaning supplies that are escalating in cost.

There is nowhere close to enough money in this legislation to help schools get ready. There is nothing in this bill that requires the operationalization of the Defense Production Act to make sure that we are producing enough PPE in this country.

There are still States in this Nation that are refusing to open up the health insurance systems so more people can get access to health insurance. There is nothing in these proposals to require open enrollment periods in States, to make sure that everyone who is contracting this virus has the chance to get health insurance.

The reality is that the States are the ones on the frontlines, standing up these responses. My State has done pretty well, but we are going bankrupt in the process. From what I can tell, listening to these speeches tonight, there is nothing significant in this package of bills to help States like mine stand up responses.

So I grieve for families who are going to listen to the news tonight and hear that Senate Republicans' stimulus plan is to cut their unemployment benefits by \$400 per week. I also grieve for this Nation, knowing that nothing in these proposals is significant enough to allow States and hospitals and healthcare systems to turn around this damaging trajectory on the virus, to produce enough PPE necessary to do the job, and to fix the dangerously broken testing system in this country.

I plead for my Republican colleagues to finally come to the table with Democrats in the House and the Senate so we can craft something together that does the job for families and does the job to fix this very, very broken healthcare system amidst an advancing pandemic.

VOTE ON HARDY NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Hardy nomination?

Mr. ROMNEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).