

And—uniting all three pillars of kids, jobs, and healthcare—we have legal protection for medical workers, schools, nonprofits, and businesses so that well-connected trial lawyers can't get even richer off of stopping the recovery in its tracks.

This is a more-than-fair, more-than-bipartisan framework for Democrats to engage with. The only reason I can see that Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader would sabotage negotiations is if, as some concluded when they killed police reform in June, they actually think bipartisan progress for the country would hurt their own political chances. That is why I said a few days ago that we would quickly learn whether the American people would be getting the responsible Democratic Party from March or the cynical, obstructionist Democratic Party from June that blocked police reform. So let's review the early going.

Almost the instant we put out this proposal—which would send thousands of dollars in cash to families and even more cash to unemployed people—the Democratic leader proclaimed that “those Republican, hard-right money people . . . don't want the Federal Government to help anybody.”

A trillion dollar proposal for kids, jobs, and healthcare just proves Republicans don't want to help anyone.

Yesterday, after meeting with the administration, the Speaker of the House said this “isn't a negotiation.”

So here we go again. It is the script from police reform all over again.

We have had weeks of talk from Democrats about the urgency of the issue, weeks of Democrats thundering that people will be hurt if we don't act. But then, when it is time to actually make a law, Democrats would rather keep political issues alive than find a bipartisan way to resolve them.

Take the issue of additional Federal unemployment insurance. For weeks now, it has been clear to a majority of Americans that we should not pay people more to stay home than we pay people who continue working.

Should we have generous unemployment insurance in this crisis? Of course. Republicans want to continue the Federal supplement at eight times the level that Democrats themselves put in place during the last recession.

But, obviously, we should not be taxing the essential workers who have kept working so the government can pay their neighbors a higher salary to stay home.

Let me say that again. We should not be taxing the essential workers who have kept working so the government can pay their neighbors a higher salary to stay home.

Until about 5 minutes ago, this was not a controversial opinion. Democrats shared it with us. The House Democrat majority leader said yesterday: “That's an argument that . . . has some validity to it. . . . It's not \$600 or bust.”

A few days earlier, our Democratic colleague Senator COONS said he

thought we would be “finding some path forward” with a different dollar figure.

The day before yesterday, our colleague Senator CARDIN said: “What is the right number? Well, we certainly understand we don't want someone to have higher benefits than what someone can make working.”

At the State level, the Democratic Governor of Connecticut agrees. This is what he said: “I think sometimes it discourages work. . . . I would put off this extra \$600 true-up they're talking about. . . . I don't think we need that.”

That is the Democratic Governor of Connecticut.

Like I said, it is not controversial. The Congressional Budget Office says that five out of six recipients of this aid—83 percent—receive more to stay home than they made on the job.

Let me say that one more time. The Congressional Budget Office says that five out of six recipients of this aid—83 percent—receive more to stay home than they made on the job. We all know that is not fair, and it is not workable in a reopening job market. We have already heard from small business owners who had trouble reopening because it would be financially irrational for their employees to come back.

This is why Republicans propose to continue providing Federal aid—continue providing hundreds of dollars per week—but do it in a more targeted way while providing even more incentives for rehiring.

But now the Speaker of the House apparently signals she rejects this bipartisan consensus and will not let a package go forward unless we continue paying people more not to work. That is apparently the Speaker's position—that she will not let a package go forward unless we continue paying people more not to work. That is what Speaker PELOSI apparently signaled yesterday: No money for schools, no money for households, no second round of the PPP, no more money for hospitals or testing, nothing at all unless we continue to pay people more not to work.

If the Democrats don't get to continue taxing essential workers to pay other people more to stay home, then nobody gets a dime.

To put it gently, that is a completely unhinged position. Sixty-two percent of Americans say that paying people extra to remain unemployed creates the wrong incentive. A Democratic Governor says he doesn't want that continuing. Her own deputy, the House Democratic majority leader, said yesterday that there should be room to negotiate.

But Speaker PELOSI is literally moving the goalposts so fast that even Democrats can't keep up, and now she apparently feels that any rescue package will have to be to the political left of her own Democratic majority leader, to the political left of the Democratic Governor of Connecticut or she will not even consider it. She will just refuse to

legislate until the election and wish the American families good luck in dealing with the pandemic.

These are not the positions of people who are putting the common good above politics. These are not the positions of people who actually want to reach an agreement to save Federal unemployment insurance from completely expiring.

The American people deserve better than this. The American people cannot afford for Democrats in Congress to have decided in June that they are finished legislating until November—not during a crisis like this. The country needs help. The country needs action. If Democratic leaders decide they will not negotiate, they will answer to the American people.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Derek Kan, of California, to be Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, 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. SCHUMER. Madam 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 Democratic leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, over the past 3 months, as Americans stayed home and forfeited their routines and their livelihoods to combat the spread of the virus, as essential workers risked their safety and their families' safety, as 50 million Americans filed unemployment claims, as small businesses folded, and as the disease spread rapidly through the summer, the Republican majority paused on addressing COVID-19 while it confirmed more rightwing judges. Americans pitched in and sacrificed, and many suffered greatly while the Senate Republicans kept their assembly line

of extreme judicial nominees humming along and did little else.

Now, after an interminable delay, the Senate Republicans have finally admitted that the country needs relief, but they can't even get their act together to produce a halfway legitimate legislative proposal. We all witnessed a week and a half of infighting on the Republican side as the country careened toward several cliffs created by Republican delay. The Republicans bickered amongst themselves as the moratorium on evictions expired, State and local governments shed jobs and cut public services, and the last enhanced unemployment checks went out the door.

When the Republicans finally convinced themselves they were ready to unveil a plan, instead of presenting a single, coherent bill, the Republicans released several incongruent drafts that were littered with corporate giveaways, K Street handouts, and Presidential pet projects.

Some Republicans proposed billions of dollars for large agribusinesses and defense contractors but not a dime to help American families stay in their homes. The Republican bill has a tax break for three-martini lunches but no food assistance for hungry kids. There is \$2 billion for a new FBI building, the location of which will increase the value of the Trump hotel, but no funding to help State and local governments retain teachers, firefighters, busdrivers, and other public employees. There is no support for Medicaid, for nursing homes, or for those with disabilities.

The proposals to support our health system and to meet our testing needs are wildly insufficient.

If you are one of the 20 to 30 million Americans who lost their jobs through no fault of their own and you can't find work, Senate Republicans think you have it too good right now. You should take a 30-percent pay cut, Republicans are saying.

This is not a serious proposal for a country in the midst of a once-in-a-generation crisis. So, as you can imagine, when reviews started rolling in yesterday, they weren't too positive. One Republican Senator said: "There are 100 problems with the plan." Another Republican: "It is a mess. I can't figure out what this bill is about." Another Republican of this Chamber said: "You look at the package that was rolled out by the Republican leadership, and it contains virtually nothing that will actually aid in the recovery." Those would be harsh criticisms if they came from Democrats, but those quotes weren't from Democrats; those were Republican Senators talking about their own party's plan.

Two senior Republican Senators have said that the Republican proposal would be lucky to get even half of the Republican conference to vote for it. Leader MCCONNELL warned Democrats against blocking the Republican proposal. It turns out that Senate Repub-

licans are blocking the Republican proposal.

So it is abundantly clear that the Senate Republican proposal for the next phase of COVID relief is not a useful starting point. You don't have to take my word for it; just ask President Trump, who took the podium yesterday afternoon and called the Senate Republican proposal "semi-irrelevant." At this point, I am beginning to wonder who does support the Republican proposal on COVID-19.

So here is where we are. We need to turn the page on the Republican proposal—and quickly. The legislative train wreck by Senate Republicans cannot derail our efforts to provide urgent, comprehensive, and necessary relief to the American people.

Speaker PELOSI and I have started negotiating with Chief of Staff Meadows and Secretary Mnuchin. We want to work with our Republican colleagues and the White House on a bill that actually meets the needs of the American people in these unprecedented times, but it is going to take good faith and compromise. We are not hearing that from Leader MCCONNELL.

Leader MCCONNELL is already drawing lines in the sand, insisting that any agreements include his specific corporate immunity provision—no negotiation. Put this provision—extreme provision—in the bill without negotiation. That sure doesn't sound like someone who wants to reach a bipartisan agreement. We are going to need everyone to pull together. We are going to need to focus on the needs of the American people.

With all due respect to the Republican leader, Americans on the brink of eviction are not crying out for a sweeping corporate liability shield. No one should be willing to torpedo all the relief Americans are counting on unless there is a giant corporate giveaway attached.

Time is short. Speaker PELOSI and I will be back at the negotiating table with the White House later today. It is time for our Republican colleagues to roll up their sleeves and get serious as well.

One final point on this subject. Again this morning, the Republican leader continued his "Alice in Wonderland" interpretation of what has happened. When what has happened is black, he says white. When what has happened is white, he says black. He is totally the opposite of the truth on what has happened.

He has suggested that Democrats might be trying to block progress on COVID relief because it might suit our party in the election, that we Democrats had decided to stop legislating until November—I mean, shocking stuff.

Over 10 weeks ago, Democrats—Democrats—passed a bill three times the size of the Republican proposal that was more generous and beneficial to the American people on nearly every measure. Leader MCCONNELL dismissed

it. Senate Democrats spent the entire month of June asking our Republican colleagues, including Leader MCCONNELL, to pass crucial legislation related to jobs, healthcare, and small business. We went on the floor and made those requests. Republicans blocked every single one—nearly every single one of those requests. So this absurd, nasty insinuation by the Republican leader doesn't pass the laugh test.

The fact that Leader MCCONNELL would even consider the idea that a political party might deny support for the American people in order to help win an election says more about the Republican leader than anybody else.

NLRB NOMINATIONS

On another matter, today the Senate will vote on two nominations to the NLRB—the National Labor Relations Board—one nominee from the Republican side and another from the Democratic side. On bipartisan boards and commissions like the NLRB, this used to be the tradition. The President's party always enjoys a majority on these boards, but it is crucial for the opposite party, whoever it is at the time, to have their recommendations approved to these bipartisan boards.

Unfortunately, the vote comes today after more than 2 years during which the Republican majority refused to even schedule a vote on a Democratic nominee to the NLRB, Mark Pearce. The Republicans waited so long that both Democratic nominees who were already on the NLRB had their terms expire.

While Democrats look forward to confirming Lauren McGarity McFerran to the NLRB later today, we are still frustrated that the Republican majority denied any Democratic representation on the Board for too long, and they continue to deny a vote on the second Democratic seat.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I intend to talk about section 230 here in just a moment. I just want to react to what the Democratic leader said and also make some observations generally about where I think we are with respect to a coronavirus relief bill.

The Democratic leader indicated that the Republican bill wasn't a serious bill. Frankly, I think it could be argued that the bill he has endorsed, passed by the House of Representatives, was not a serious bill. It was about \$3.5 trillion, which would make it about \$1 trillion larger than the massive coronavirus relief bill we passed unanimously in the Senate back in March. That bill, at the time, for a lot of people, represented something unlike anything they had ever seen before, both in terms of scale and scope, the expanse of all the issues that it addressed. I think in many respects it was a bill that most Members believed at the time that we needed to get as much assistance out there as quickly