



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2020

No. 135

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, our refuge and strength, give us reverence for Your greatness. Guide our Senators around the pitfalls of their work, enabling them to have hearts sustained by Your peace. May they surrender their will to You as they trust You to direct their steps.

Lord, remind them that leadership can work miracles with cooperation but rarely accomplishes much with conflict. Inspire our lawmakers to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Help them to strive to live with such integrity that they give You the honor due Your Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak 1 minute in morning business.

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

MOTORCOACH INDUSTRY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, the motorcoach industry has been particularly hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic turndown as a result of it. Iowa has many motorcoach operators, several of which are really family owned and some of them for two or three generations.

I have been in frequent communication with these Iowans, and I am learn-

ing they are quickly coming to the point of making a decision of whether they can even stay in business. Motorcoaches provide passenger transportation services to all Americans, providing over 600 million passenger trips annually across the country. By comparison, airlines provided service for 925 million passenger trips in 2019.

While most other modes of transportation received specific funding to help them through the pandemic, the motorcoach industry has not. What they are really referring to when they talk to me, they seem to feel that they have been left out when we have given several tens of millions of dollars to help the airline industry.

I spoke with Secretary Mnuchin about this matter and have relayed the concerns from these Iowa companies to relevant committees here in the Senate. The government relies on motorcoach industries to help move troops and also evacuate people to safety during our natural disasters. However, with passenger bookings being nonexistent and few charters being scheduled, this leaves little hope of rebound yet this year. The industry may not survive to provide this service in the future if they don't receive support.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on Monday, Senate Republicans released a starting proposal for another major pandemic rescue package.

This is what we want to do: Continue a Federal supplement to unemployment benefits that is otherwise about to expire; send thousands of dollars more in cash to American families; keep funding the Payroll Protection

Program to prevent more layoffs; subsidize rehiring to get laid-off workers their jobs back and create new incentives for workplace safety; give K-12 schools, colleges, and universities funding to reopen safely—more money than the House Democrats have proposed; support healthcare providers in the latest hotspots and keep supporting the race for vaccines; provide common-sense legal protection so that schools, hospitals, and other employers can reopen without being buried in lawsuits.

That is what we put forward—a trillion dollars for kids, jobs, and healthcare. It is a framework that is more generous in key areas than House Democrats' totally unserious proposal—a framework that could have kept the additional Federal payments to unemployed workers flowing instead of expiring this week.

There is a fact of life here in the Senate. It takes 60 votes to legislate, so the American people cannot get any of the additional relief that Republicans want to give them unless Democrats at least come to the table. Either our Democratic colleagues come to the table or the American people will not get the help they need. That is why I said this week we have come down to one key question: Will the country get the Democrats who showed up back in March to pass the bipartisan CARES Act or will the country get the Democrats who showed up in June to block police reform and keep that issue alive through November?

Unfortunately, 3 days in, it hasn't been a close call. The Speaker of the House and the Democratic leader refuse to let anyone else speak on their side. I understand the Democratic leader has actually forbidden—bidden his own Democratic ranking members from talking and negotiating with their Republican counterparts who are spearheading the different components. You see, bipartisan, Member-level discussions might actually generate some progress, and progress does not appear

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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to be something the leaders on the other side want.

On Monday, the Speaker of the House claimed she could not wait to start negotiations, but then on Tuesday, she said her discussion with the administration “isn’t a negotiation.” And then the Speaker said: “The appropriate thing for the Senate to do is pass a bill and then we can negotiate with them.” Meanwhile, the Democratic leader is over here making sure that cannot happen. This is quite the partnership: the House Speaker moves the goalposts while the Democratic leader hides the football. They will not engage when the Trump administration tries to discuss our comprehensive plan. They will not engage when the Administration floats a narrower proposal. They, basically, will not engage, period.

The Speaker and the Democratic leader are playing rope-a-dope with the health, welfare, and livelihoods of American families. With benefits expiring, with the Paycheck Protection Program winding down, and millions unemployed, the Democrats are saying “my way or the highway” with a Socialist wish list that was laughed off by everyone from journalists to economists the instant they introduced it.

This is what reporters had to say about Speaker PELOSI’s proposal in May:

“The more than 1,800-page bill makes a long wish list for Democrats.”

“Neither this bill nor anything reassembling it will ever become law.”

Even the Speaker’s own Democratic Members knew it was a joke. “Privately, several House Democrats concede the bill feels more like an effort to appease the most liberal members of the caucus.”

Yet this is what they are holding out for. Let’s recall some of the specific items. These are the things over which Democrats are blowing up negotiations and forcing a lapse in extra unemployment benefits; tax increase on small businesses; taxpayer-funded checks for illegal immigrants; taxpayer-funded diversity studies of the legal pot industry; and their ongoing obsession with something called the State and local tax, or SALT, which would be a massive giveaway for high earners in blue States. In other words, a tax cut for high earners in blue States. Let me say that again. Democrats are holding up help for struggling people over special tax breaks for rich people in blue States, an idea that has been criticized by economists from all sides.

Republicans want to get more help to families right now, but Speaker PELOSI says: Let them eat SALT.

They also want to spend another trillion dollars bailing out State and local governments that only spent—listen to this—25 percent of the money we sent them back in March. Some State and local governments have only spent 25 percent of the money we sent them back in March, and the Speaker and Democratic leader want to send them another trillion dollars.

This is silly stuff. None of it should be stopping negotiations and none of it would be if our Democratic colleagues actually wanted to get an outcome.

Let’s talk about unemployment insurance. Both Republicans and Democrats agree in these extraordinary times it makes sense for the Federal Government to provide the stark additional help on top of normal unemployment. Republicans don’t want this aid to expire. Our plan continues it, but the Speaker and the Democratic leader say they will not agree to anything unless the program pays people more to stay home than to work.

Prominent Democrats have publicly said they agree with our position. The Democratic Governor of Connecticut says he wants to continue the benefit at a more targeted level. Multiple Members of the Senate and Speaker PELOSI’s own House Democratic Majority Leader have all said in the last few days that they are open to negotiating this, but the Speaker and the Democratic leader have cut all their colleagues out. They are standing alone, saying: “Our way or the highway.” And so people are going to suffer.

I understand the Democratic leader said he felt offended when I noted that some people are suggesting the Democrats’ strange behavior is explained by politics; that some people think Democrats are behaving like national suffering would only hurt President Trump. Now, the Democratic leader, himself, pointed that exact accusation at various Republicans during the Obama Presidency on multiple occasions. I know memories can be short around here when it is convenient.

More broadly, actions speak louder than words. Democrats spent weeks shouting that the Senate should act on police reform, but when Senator TIM SCOTT gave them the chance, they blocked action. They blocked the Senate from even taking up the subject. And now, so far, this is the sequel.

Democrats talked a big game about wanting to provide more assistance, but now that it is “go time,” they show zero appetite for any bipartisan outcome at all.

This is personal for me. Kentucky has not finished fighting with the coronavirus, and the Federal Government must not be finished helping Kentucky. Laid-off Kentuckians need more help. Kentucky schools need more help. Under our proposal, Kentucky alone would receive \$193 million for testing and contact tracing to fight the spread of the disease. This should be just as personal for every single Senator.

None of our States deserve the Democrats’ rope-a-dope. No American family deserves it. Don’t my distinguished ranking member colleagues wish they could be involved in robust bipartisan discussions with our chairman, like back in March, and not watching from the sidelines as their leader shuts down talks on TV? Do they really think the Democratic leader’s tactics are serving the common good of their States?

Republicans have put forward a framework that would do huge amounts of good for huge numbers of American families. If Democrats ever come to the table, we will be able to bridge our differences and make a law.

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.

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, the Senate will soon acknowledge a moment of silence for the 150,000 Americans who have now died from COVID-19—more lives than our country lost in World War I. This national tragedy is more keenly felt because it has not and cannot be properly mourned. One of the most devastating consequences of this disease is that it keeps us apart even in death. There is no final clutching of the hand of a loved one, no funeral to remember one by. Grandchildren, wrapped in protective gear, wave goodbye from across the hospital room. There are 150,000 Americans who have died, which is more than in any other nation on God’s green Earth—more than of our allies and more than of our adversaries, more than in the most populous nations, more than in those with mere fractions of our wealth and power, and more—so many more—than in the nation from which this virus originated.

We will debate the reasons for this ugly truth—we must—if we are to avoid compounding our errors and heaping sorrow upon sorrow as the