

virus continues to rage throughout our country. Yet now we spend a moment to acknowledge how much our country has suffered already.

We have lost friends and neighbors, brothers and sisters, fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, a beloved professor at Howard University, a civil rights pioneer, and a renowned psychiatrist. We have lost a Brooklyn doctor, at 62, on the verge of retirement, who in the early weeks of the crisis in New York, worked day shifts at the ICU and night shifts at the Hospital Center across the street before finally succumbing to the disease himself. We have lost so many in so short a time. Unable to grieve them in the manner they deserve, we respect this moment of silence, this moment of sorrow.

I ask unanimous consent that there be a moment of silence to recognize the more than 150,000 American deaths from the novel coronavirus.

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

There will now be a moment of silence to recognize the American deaths from the novel coronavirus.

(Moment of silence.)

CORONAVIRUS

Madam President, as COVID-19 continues to spread through dozens of States, our country is dealing with multiple crises at this time.

We learned today that the most recent quarter was the worst on record for our economy. The problem is not new or surprising. Millions of newly unemployed Americans cannot go back to work, cannot afford the rent, cannot put food on the table. Small businesses are waiting to see if the Federal loan program that kept them alive will be renewed. Parents are worried sick about their kids returning to school in the fall. The State and local governments that fought this disease on the frontline when the Trump administration refused to give them help are deep in the red and are slashing public services, teachers, firefighters, and more.

Throughout America, people wait days and days—even weeks—for the results of their tests, which renders the tests almost useless because we don't have an adequate testing program at the national level. This is the greatest public health challenge and crisis and the greatest economic challenge in at least 75 years. We need to confront all of these crises.

Senate Republicans hardly want to address any of them. They dithered for months and then produced a half-baked, halfhearted proposal of half measures—a proposal that their own caucus and their own President didn't fully support. Just last night, the Republican leader confirmed that 20 Republican Senators want to do nothing in the face of the historic problems we face, and because the Senate Republicans haven't gotten their act together, 2 weeks have now gone down the drain and 3 months went down the drain before that because the Republicans have been wedded to a twisted

ideology that the Federal Government shouldn't help people even in a time of national emergency.

As the country is about to careen over several cliffs as a result of Republican delay, dithering, and disunity, our friends on the other side are now scrambling. It is dawning on them now—not a week ago, not 3 weeks ago, not 2 months ago—that we are facing a cliff with unemployment—although we face cliffs on other issues, as well, right now.

I understand that, today, a few of my colleagues on the other side will ask the Senate to pass a reduction of the enhanced employment benefit from \$600 a week to \$200 a week or, even worse, a smaller percentage of a worker's wages than the Republicans proposed in their bill earlier this week. An already stingy Republican proposal has gotten even stingier as the week has gone on.

I have made it very clear why the proposal by the Senator of Wisconsin is terrible policy for four main reasons.

First and most obviously, it would hurt the unemployed as 1.4 million Americans filed new claims for unemployment last week, and the number is going up again. Our economy is still shedding jobs, and Americans are losing their paychecks through no fault of their own. Yet the Republicans want to take \$1,600 out of their pockets every single month. They want to give people who lost their jobs through no fault of their own a 34-percent pay cut. It is shocking, inhumane, wrong.

Second, it would exacerbate poverty. Our enhanced unemployment benefits have prevented nearly 12 million Americans from slipping into poverty. The Republicans want to slash and burn that poverty-preventing policy. Let's have more people go into poverty. That is what this amendment would do.

Third, it would devastate our economy. One of the few bright spots over the past few months has been consumer spending, in no small part because these unemployment benefits go to those Americans who need to spend them as soon as they get them. No wonder respected economic forecasters project that the Republican policy on unemployment insurance would cost us over a million jobs this year and 3 million more next year.

Finally, we know that this policy is impossible to implement. When our office called State unemployment offices to ask them about the Republican proposal, they said its implementation would be a catastrophe. One office simply said: "This would cause chaos."

This is not a serious proposal. We all know it will never pass the House and that it doesn't have enough votes to come close to passing in the Senate. Large numbers of Republicans will vote against it. This effort appears to be an effort to provide the Republicans some political cover because they can't get their act together and force the country over these cliffs.

We are trying to negotiate with the White House and would welcome nego-

tiations with our Senate colleagues, but the reason negotiations are going nowhere right now is that the Republicans are divided. Who is leading the effort on the Republican side—Chief of Staff Meadows and Secretary Mnuchin? Is Senator JOHNSON and Senator BRAUN's effort to pass reduced unemployment benefits a real offer from the Republicans or just a stunt?

Leader MCCONNELL has said that the Democrats will not engage. I would remind him that he refuses to go into the room when Speaker PELOSI, Secretary Mnuchin, Chief of Staff Meadows, and I sit in there. Once again, Senator MCCONNELL engages in "Alice in Wonderland" tactics and speeches and words. What he says is exactly the opposite of what is true. We are trying to negotiate, and the Senate Republicans are not.

Next, it is clear that the Senate Republicans don't have a unified position on anything. The main thing we hear from Leader MCCONNELL is that he would torpedo all of the relief that the Americans are counting on unless there is a giant corporate immunity provision attached, and he says he will not even negotiate on it. Who is holding things up? Who is standing in the way? Leader MCCONNELL and his Republican caucus are, certainly, at the top of the list.

And President Trump is all over the lot. He himself called the Republican Senate proposal "semi-irrelevant."

When your own President says your proposal is semi-irrelevant, as Trump has said to the Senate Republicans, you know that they are tied in a knot and can't get anything done.

The President seems to endorse a different policy every time he finds a microphone. The one thing we are sure he supports is spending taxpayer dollars on a new FBI building to boost the value of his hotel.

Yesterday, we learned the President asked for nearly \$400 million in renovations to the White House in the Republican COVID proposal. Seriously? The President proposes no help for Americans to stay in their houses but wants the taxpayers to fork over nearly \$400 million to help him renovate the White House?

Simply put, negotiations with the White House and Senate Republicans right now are like trying to nail Jell-O to the wall. We are trying to work with our counterparts, but it is immensely frustrating to deal with a negotiating partner who can't say what they support on nearly any issue.

Now, we are hearing the President and his representatives have floated the idea of a skinny bill to address one program, to extend unemployment insurance at much lower rates, which hurts the unemployed. But while the Nation waits, desperate for comprehensive relief, they leave everything else out.

What about improving testing, where people have to wait in line—wait for hours, days, and weeks to get their

tests back? What about helping State and local governments, who have to lay off firefighters and busdrivers? What about dealing with people who might be evicted? What about dealing with people who can't feed their kids? The list of issues goes on and on and on, and they are all immediate and urgent.

So to have this bill, which is inadequate on employment benefits alone—cuts them to the bone—and not include any of the other issues, in a hope to escape and then do nothing more? Forget it. It will not pass the Senate. It will not pass the House. It is a stunt.

Even if the White House would agree to another extension of enhanced unemployment at its current level, which many, if not most, Senate Republicans will refuse to support, there are just too many things left out—opening up our schools safely, healthcare testing and reducing the wait to get test results, State and local governments, so much more.

And even if the White House finally comes around to the position that we should extend the moratorium on evictions, that wouldn't be enough. It makes no sense to extend the moratorium on evictions without helping Americans actually afford the rent. We can prevent landlords or banks from kicking Americans out of their homes for another few months, but then what? The same Americans would be 6 months behind on the rent and have no hope of making up the difference.

So let's look. Here is where we are. Americans are worried as this awful pandemic rages on. The lifelines we passed here in Congress to protect families, small businesses, renters, school kids, and so many more are expired, and our Republican colleagues dither. We have a comprehensive, bold proposal. They have virtually nothing.

Let's remember recent history. That may give us some hope that we can get something done. Back in March and April, Republicans were late to the game, just as they are now, and proposed stingy, insufficient legislation in response to COVID-19, just like they are doing now. Each time, Democrats were not bullied by Republicans into passing something that wouldn't work and be insufficient, but we demanded that our colleagues sit down with us and negotiate a bill that meets the needs of the American people—and that is what we did.

In the second, third, and fourth phases of COVID relief, our negotiations produced much better legislation—legislation that passed both Houses with near unanimity. It is never easy, and it is never painless, but it can be done. We just need our Republican colleagues to get their act together, roll up their sleeves, understand the gravity and breadth and depth of this problem and negotiate with us in a serious way.

I yield the floor.

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. CARDIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

REMEMBERING JOHN LEWIS

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, today our colleague John Lewis will be laid to rest. What an incredible legacy he leaves behind.

I was blessed to serve with him in the House of Representatives. The two of us were elected in the same class to start serving in the House of Representatives in 1987. We became friends, and he was certainly an inspiration to all of us.

I particularly mention his name today because of the challenges we are finding to our First Amendment right to peacefully protest. John Lewis frequently talked about "good trouble" and that all of us have a responsibility to speak out when we see something that is wrong and to do it in a peaceful way.

It is interesting that his last public appearance was with the protesters of Black Lives Matter here in DC, as he wanted to be there and was proud to see the diversity of the group who was there to protest the brutalities that we have seen in America and the systemic racism we see in our country.

We not only have the right but the responsibility to speak out when we see these injustices. The First Amendment to our Nation's Constitution is key to the foundation of our country's democracy, including the right of people to peacefully assemble and petition for redress of grievances.

The President of the United States ordering unidentified agents of the Department of Homeland Security to arrest and detain protesters is a flagrant breach of trust and potentially a violation of the law. Congress must speak up in a unified, bipartisan voice and tell the President that such an escalation and militarization of our city streets without provocation or invitation from local officials must stop and must stop now.

I am gravely concerned that when Federal law enforcement agents are deployed in this manner, their presence has increased tensions and caused more confrontation between demonstrators and police. Indeed, local, State, and even Federal officials—including the U.S. Attorney—have criticized the Federal agents' intervention and tactics in Portland.

I share the concerns of many of my colleagues regarding the misuse of resources and personnel, particularly when Federal law enforcement officers are used for political purposes by the President to violate the civil rights of our constituents. We all should be concerned that both the Justice and Homeland Security Departments are misusing their emergency authorities and are actually aggravating the situation in Portland and elsewhere.

I have cosponsored legislation that would place important limits and oversight on the use of Federal officers for enforcement operations and arrests relating to protests, including making sure that law enforcement officers are clearly identified.

I recently voted in the Senate to place further limits on the transfer of excess military equipment to State and local law enforcement agencies, and I will continue to demand that America reform its Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies.

After the shocking death of George Floyd in police custody in Minneapolis, Congress must address systemic racism and police brutality through passage of the Justice in Policing Act. While this legislation has passed the House, Senator MCCONNELL has still refused to bring it up in the Senate, condemning it to his legislative graveyard.

Now more than ever, we urgently need to rebuild trust with our communities and change the Trump administration's mentality from a warrior to a guardian approach for law enforcement.

News reports indicate that Federal law enforcement officers have been using unmarked vehicles to drive around downtown Portland and detain protesters since at least mid-July. In some cases, citizens could not tell the difference between law enforcement and far-right extremists in the region who wore similar military gear.

This reminds us of the most radical images that we have seen in authoritative, repressive regimes on how they violate the rights of their citizens.

Federal officials have been reported as grabbing Americans in the dark, not providing any form of identification, and arresting, searching, and detaining individuals in cells before properly reading their Miranda rights. There are widespread reports of Federal agents not having any probable cause before making these arrests.

Not only are these actions irresponsible and dangerous, it is a violation of our constitutional rights. America's strength is in the ideals that we believe in. We are the global leader in democratic values and the rule of law. These actions weaken our Nation, and these actions weaken America's credibility and global leadership on behalf of democratic values.

I am pleased that last week the inspectors general of the Department of Homeland Security and Justice agreed to investigate how their agents used force, detained people, and conducted themselves in confrontations with protesters both in Portland, OR, and Washington, DC.

Recall in Washington, DC, that Attorney General Barr used force to clear a peaceful protest at Lafayette Park just outside the White House. Attorney General Barr took this action so that the President could hold up a Bible for a photo-op outside of a church. This was an unacceptable breach of faith in the Constitution. It breaks the trust