



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2020

No. 138

## 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.

Eternal Spirit, to whom we must give and account for all our powers and privileges, guide the Members of this body so that they will be faithful stewards of Your will.

Lord, open their minds and hearts to know and do Your bidding, teaching them to rely on Your strength and to serve You with honor. Help them to discover in their daily work the joy of a partnership with You. Use them to bring good news to the marginalized, to comfort the brokenhearted, and to announce that captives will be released and the shackled will be freed.

May our Senators depend upon the power of Your prevailing providence, for You are the author and finisher of our faith.

We pray in Your great 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 for 1 minute in morning business.

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

### ABSENTEE VOTING

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, Iowa's secretary of state Paul Pate will mail an absentee ballot request form to every registered Iowa voter for the No-

vember election. This is a request form, not a ballot, being mailed out to everybody.

Iowa's current absentee ballot system allows anyone who wants to vote by mail the option to do so. Just send in the request form when you receive it, or you may download it online, but if Iowans prefer to vote in person, that remains their choice.

There has been a lot of misinformation claiming that some massive, Federal intervention is needed to allow citizens to vote by mail. This isn't true in Iowa or elsewhere. Every State has vote-by-mail, and 16 States ask for a reason, such as being over 65, for example, but most have waived or loosened this requirement.

Some groups are now using the pandemic to push for a Federal mandate on States to adopt a new, universal vote-by-mail system overnight. It took 5 years when Washington State implemented voting by mail. Requiring every State to replace its current voting system with a whole new, centralized, mail-only system this close to our November election is a recipe for disaster. In such a system, every registered voter, including those who have died or moved away, would automatically be mailed a ballot with no voting in person.

Every Iowan who wants to vote absentee in November can do so, and those who want to vote in person can also do so safely. It is a voter's choice and should remain so.

I yield the floor.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

### HEALS ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, another day has come and gone in this once-in-a-century national battle for our country.

Yesterday, more of our neighbors had to say goodbye to loved ones whose lives were claimed by this virus. Yesterday, more doctors and more nurses worked long shifts on the frontlines, fighting to heal strangers and limit the national death toll that now exceeds 150,000. Yesterday, more workers brought home pink slips, and more Main Street businesses saw the end of their PPP lifelines fast approaching. Yesterday, more laid-off Americans filed new claims for unemployment insurance or lay awake wondering about next month's rent. Yesterday, more school officials wondered what to tell parents, students, and teachers about September.

What happened here in the Capitol yesterday? With the American people fighting all of these battles and more, what did the Speaker of the House and the Democratic leader do with yet another day of deliberations? Yet again, it was the exact same refrain. It never seems to change: We are feeling optimistic. We spoke very politely to the administration, but we are still nowhere close on the substance.

It has now been more than a week since Senate Republicans released a serious proposal for another major rescue package—\$1 trillion for kids, jobs, and healthcare. The Democrats are blocking it all. It is like they expect applause for merely keeping a civil tone with the President's team—never mind they are still obstructing any action for our country.

Senate Republicans want to revive a Federal add-on to unemployment insurance, which the Democratic leader would not let us extend last week. We want to send another round of direct checks straight into families' pockets. We want to supply generous, new incentives for rehiring American workers and workplace safety. We want to send historic money to schools for reopening and invest even more in testing and vaccine research. We want legal protections so schools, churches, charities, and businesses can reopen.

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



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The Democrats say they want many of the same things. I certainly believe that many of my Democratic colleagues who serve as ranking members want many of the same things and could easily find common ground with our chairmen if the Democratic leader would let them talk. Instead, we have gotten a full week of the Speaker of the House's and the Democratic leader's shutting out all of their own Members and refusing to move an inch off of demands that everyone knows are outlandish.

The Democratic leaders want the entirety of their massive, far-left wish list—all of it. Speaker PELOSI is still agitating for strange, new special interest carve-outs for the marijuana industry—even claiming they are COVID-related. She said that, with respect to this virus, marijuana is “a therapy that has proven successful.” You can't make this up. I hope she shared her breakthrough with Dr. Fauci. In the other corner, Leader SCHUMER is still demanding massive tax cuts for rich people in blue States or he won't let any relief become law.

These are the kinds of nongermane pet projects that our Democratic colleagues are demanding—not a dime for kids, jobs, and healthcare unless the administration let's them check off every leftwing lobbyist's Christmas list 5 months early.

Let's listen to what Speaker PELOSI's own House Democrats said about this bill when they passed it. Here is what House Democrats said about the bill that Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader now say is their absolute redline:

One quote: “The partisan nature and wide scope of this bill make it doomed upon arrival in the Senate.”

Another quote: “In response to COVID-19, our relief efforts must be targeted, timely, and transparent. The HEROES Act does not meet those standards.”

Another quote: “This isn't a plan; it's a wish list.”

Another quote: “Partisan gamesmanship.”

Another quote: “Some in my own party . . . have decided to use this package as an opportunity to make political statements and propose a bill that goes far beyond pandemic relief and has no chance at becoming law, further declaring the help so many need.”

Those are quotes from House Democrats' views about the so-called Heroes Act, but now the entire thing is the price of admission for giving hard-hit Americans any more aid.

What worked back in March with the CARES Act were productive and good-faith conversations between chairmen and ranking members—a bipartisan process led by Members.

But this time, the Speaker and the Democratic leader have forbidden their Members from negotiating at all. The ranking member on HELP cannot even discuss testing with Chairman ALEX-

ANDER. The ranking member on Small Business cannot even discuss PPP with Chairman RUBIO and Chairman COLLINS.

No, no; the Speaker and the Democratic leader only want themselves at the table so that behind closed doors they can say that nobody gets another dime of Federal unemployment money; nobody gets extra school funding; and nobody gets more money for testing and PPE unless they burn cash on 1,000 unrelated things.

I am talking about things like stimulus checks for illegal immigrants; a trillion-dollar slush fund for States, even though States and localities have only spent a quarter of the money we sent them in March. Let me say that again—a trillion-dollar slush fund for States, even though States and localities have only spent a quarter of the money we sent them in March. In my State, the State administration only spent 6 percent of the money we sent them—6 percent—diversity and inclusion studies, a soil health program, and on and on and on.

The House bill does all these things while completely forgetting a second round of the Paycheck Protection Program—no second round for PPP—and sending less money for schools than the Senate bill.

This is what they will not budge from. And every day the script is the same, and the script is: We had a pleasant conversation, but we don't feel like making a deal. Maybe tomorrow.

Here is the problem: Every day the Democratic leaders repeat the same act here in the Capitol, they are letting down the struggling people who need our help. Day after day, Americans are trying to stay above water—layoffs, benefit cuts, threats of eviction, the possibility of losing a family business forever, towns wondering if their Main Streets will ever come back, school principals with no idea what to tell communities.

That is the reality in Kentucky and in all 50 States, and none of these people are helped one bit, not one bit, by the Democratic leaders' charade.

What American families need is an outcome, a bipartisan result. Senate Republicans have had a roadmap sitting on the table for more than a week. We didn't put every Republican wish list item in history into an 1,800-page encyclopedia and insist on starting there.

We built a serious starting place based on the bipartisan programs we passed back in March—unanimously, by the way—and what the country needs now.

If our colleagues across the aisle would do the same—frankly, if our colleagues across the aisle were even allowed—allowed to take part in the discussions, we could get this done for our country. We did it in March. We could do it again, but both sides have to actually want it.

## RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Mark Wesley Menezes, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Energy.

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, I just listened to my friend the Republican leader. The Republican leader is so tied in a knot by his own caucus and his President that all he can do is give Alice-in-Wonderland, partisan speeches. All he can do is threaten to force sham votes that will not pass and will not answer the anguished cries for help that are coming from so many of our fellow Americans.

On the other hand, over the weekend and yesterday, Speaker PELOSI and I continued our negotiations with the White House on the next phase of COVID-relief legislation. After a week of stalled talks because Republicans could not articulate a position on hardly anything, I believe we are making progress. We came closer together on several issues; however, we remain far apart on a number of issues, but we are finally moving in the right direction.

At the moment, the gap between our two parties in the negotiations is about priorities and about scale. As this huge crisis engulfs our Nation, Democrats believe we need a bold, strong, and vigorous response from the Federal Government. It will take a lot of resources, but if we don't commit those resources now, for sure the costs will only grow in the months to come.

Democrats are fighting to meet the needs of a desperate nation. Our Republican friends, however—President Trump, his aides, and the Republicans in the Senate—do not seem to appreciate the gravity of the situation. They do not understand the needs of the country that are so great, and they are not stepping up to meet those needs. This disease has washed over our country like a great flood, and Republicans