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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, August 7, 2020, at 10 a.m.

Senate

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2020

The Senate met at 9:30 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 shield, we rejoice in the gift of Your salvation.

Look with favor upon our Senators today, delivering them from fear and guiding them around the obstacles that hinder their progress. Lord, unite them for the common good of this great land. Manifest Your purposes to them, making clear Your plans and guiding them with Your love. Give them the wisdom to have confidence in Your power as You inspire them to use their talents as instruments of liberation and healing.

Almighty God, have compassion upon our Nation and world.

We pray in Your Holy 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 (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Iowa.

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

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

MESKWAKI POWWOW

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to speak about a Native American tradition in the State of Iowa. It is about the Meskwaki Nation—the only federally recognized Tribe in Iowa.

This year, many important annual community events have been canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Each year, the Meskwaki Powwow serves as an opportunity to bring the Meskwaki Tribe together with fellow Iowans to share, learn, and honor the Meskwakis' unique contributions to our State. This gathering is important to preserving the Meskwakis' heritage and sharing it with the next generation.

In light of the cancellation, the Meskwakis are posting a number of educational resources on their Facebook page, at Meskwaki Nation, to honor the Meskwaki Annual Powwow week. I encourage Iowans to visit and learn.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

HEALS ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it has been 1 week since Senate Democrats forced the additional Federal benefit for jobless Americans to expire.

Senate Republicans tried everything to prevent the lapse. That Monday, we rolled out a comprehensive proposal for

another rescue package that would have kept extra Federal benefits flowing. The Democrats refused to act, so we tried to force the issue.

One of our Senators requested unanimous consent to continue these benefits through the end of the year at a still historically generous level. This plan would have also corrected the bizarre choice facing American workers whom the system was actually paying more to stay home than to resume working, but that wasn't good enough for the Democratic leader, and he objected.

Another Republican Senator then asked unanimous consent to extend Federal support exactly as it had been for 1 more week so that jobless Americans didn't have to bear the cost of the Democrats' leisurely negotiating pace. Once again, the Democratic leader objected.

Finally, Republicans forced a floor vote to demonstrate whether Senators were even willing to debate the issue, whether Senators would even consider extending these benefits, and every single Democrat present voted no.

The week since then has seen plenty of talk and plenty of stalling from the Democratic leaders, who have insisted on handling this themselves—but no significant movement toward progress. They have still kept their ranking members and more reasonable voices locked up. The Speaker and the Democratic leader continue to obstruct the kinds of committee-level discussions that delivered the CARES Act, which are no longer in style. Only they are allowed to speak. Only they among the

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



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Democrats are allowed to have an opinion.

Day after day, they have stonewalled the President's team. Day by day, they have tried to invent new euphemisms to create the illusion of progress. Yesterday's contribution from the Speaker was this: There is now a light at the end of the tunnel, but "how long that tunnel is remains to be seen." Well, there are a lot of struggling Americans who could tell Speaker PELOSI exactly how long this tunnel has been and that it will continue to be endless unless the Democrats let us provide more relief to the country.

Their second week of inaction has brought the country to a second cliff in coronavirus aid. Last week, it was the extra Federal benefit for laid-off workers. This week, it is the enormously popular Paycheck Protection Program that has kept millions more Americans off the unemployment rolls in the first place.

The PPP was written and designed in March by Chairman RUBIO and Chairman COLLINS as Main Street America was hurtling toward a cliff. Their innovative policy has saved small businesses on a massive scale. Hundreds of billions of dollars have gone out in emergency loans to more than 600,000 small businesses.

I hear constantly from Kentuckians whose local businesses and whose jobs would not have survived the last several months without this program. From distilleries to medical device suppliers to domestic violence advocates, the PPP has helped community institutions weather the storm and keep more Kentuckians on the payroll.

This emergency program hasn't been perfect, but it has been a huge, huge success. It has remained a success because, back in April, we finally got the Democrats to let us provide another wave of funding after a pointless delay and pointless brinksmanship—you may detect a pattern here—but now many of these businesses are reaching the ends of their ropes. Their PPP money is dwindling, but since the virus remains with us, even where shutdown orders have been lifted, commerce has not roared all the way back.

One survey found that one in four workers who were hired back and kept getting paid because of the PPP has now been warned he might be let go again, and you can bet that number will increase.

Here is how one business owner explained the looming danger to reporters: "If there isn't another round of stimulus, we'll start cutting past the fat and to the bone, and that's our people, and our people are hard to replace."

Congress should be strengthening the PPP. Instead, the Democrats have put it in jeopardy. This Saturday, August 8, is the official deadline for anyone who hasn't yet gotten a loan to apply. The door closes the day after tomorrow, and many firms that did receive the assistance are getting nearer to the bottom of the well.

This is why the Senate Republicans' blueprint for another major rescue package would put \$190 billion into a second draw of the PPP for the businesses that most need help. The House Democrats' \$3 trillion wish list totally left that out. They ignored the PPP. We want to re-up it.

This is just one of the many ways our serious proposal beats the absurd far-left wish list the Democrats' own moderate Members laughed out of the room. While they focus on unrelated liberal demands, like tax cuts for rich people in blue States, we are focused on serious solutions for the problems facing Americans right now.

Yet, instead of getting serious, the Democratic leaders have chosen, instead, to misrepresent and even lie about what is at stake. The Democratic leader's repeated misstatements about the legal protections that the Senate Republicans and the White House want for schools, doctors, nurses, charities, and employers have earned him "three Pinocchios" from the Washington Post and a "Mostly False" rating from another fact-checker. Let me say that again. The Democratic leader's repeated misstatements about the legal protections the Senate Republicans and the White House want for schools, doctors, nurses, charities, and employers have earned him "three Pinocchios" from the Washington Post and a "Mostly False" rating from another fact-checker. He doesn't even seem to realize that we modeled our medical malpractice reforms on the COVID-related protections that his fellow Democrats put in place in New York.

So this is where we are—another week that the Speaker of the House and the Democratic leader have spent stonewalling the President's team in talks and holding out for ideological pet projects with no relationship whatsoever to the COVID crisis. Now, as a result, struggling Americans are facing another cliff, with another important form of relief on its last legs.

We face a second straight week of political theater from our Democratic colleagues with no result—except more pain for families, more uncertainty for workers, and more evidence to suggest that perhaps the Democratic leaders were never serious about getting something accomplished in the first place.

All across America, small business owners are hurting and hoping the Democrats get reasonable and allow another major package to move forward. Unemployed Americans need these endless talks to finally bear fruit, and so do school principals and working parents and senior citizens and nurses and doctors and university presidents and students of all ages.

That is why I will not be adjourning the Senate for our August recess today as had been previously scheduled. I have told Republican Senators they will have 24-hours' notice before a vote, but the Senate will be convening on Monday, and I will be right here in

Washington. The House has already skipped town, but the Senate will not adjourn for August unless and until the Democrats demonstrate they will never let an agreement materialize.

A lot of Americans' hopes—a lot of American lives—are riding on the Democrats' endless talk. I hope they are not disappointed.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 4461

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4461) to provide for a period of continuing appropriations in the event of a lapse in appropriations under the normal appropriations process, and establish procedures and consequences in the event of a failure to enact appropriations.

Mr. McCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

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 legislative clerk read the nomination of John Peter Cronan, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The 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 (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, over the past week and a half, Speaker