

rank—who have passed through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee overwhelmingly with bipartisan support.

Every year, we get the State Department's budget. Every year, we have a budget that is decimated, including for the issues that my colleague cares about. It is because those of us on the committee who believe in the power of diplomacy in the State Department work feverishly to restore and enhance the budget of the State Department that it has been able to carry out its mission. But the budget that the Secretary of State comes before the committee to defend and advocate for is a huge, huge consequence.

Look, we are constantly doing things to protect the lives of American citizens in the committee. I could enumerate a number both of resolutions as well as legislative language that would have far-reaching—I mean, I am in favor of resolutions. They are an expression of sentiment. But legislation that puts into action within our laws the ability of countries that conduct blasphemy and other types of crimes against people who simply want to pursue their religious views—that would be far more consequential.

So there is a lot that goes on in the committee, and a lot of it has actually been bipartisan. By the same token, if our colleague is chagrined that not enough is moving through the committee, talk to the chairman because you can't move anything through the committee if you don't have committee business markups, and we haven't had one—I think except for one—and we are in August.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BRAUN). The Senator from Ohio.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I think we are all a little frustrated right now because the negotiations on the next COVID-19 package seem to be at a standstill. If you talk to the negotiators and you even read the press accounts, which are pretty open, what they say is that they are deadlocked. One of the main reasons they are deadlocked is over this issue of unemployment insurance.

Now, recall, back in the CARES Act, there was an extension of a Federal supplement to unemployment insurance. So we put in place a \$600 Federal benefit on top of the State benefits.

At the time, there were concerns about whether that would lead to people on unemployment insurance getting more money than they would at work, and there was actually an amendment here on the Senate floor regarding that. Although it did not pass, I think pretty much every Republican supported it with that concern.

In fact, that is what has happened. If you look at what has happened over the past couple of months, as the \$600 has been put in place, it clearly has often led to people making more on un-

employment insurance than they can make at work.

In fact, the Congressional Budget Office, which is a nonpartisan group here in the U.S. Congress that analyzes some of these economic issues, has said that if someone is on unemployment insurance today, they are likely to be making substantially more than someone who is not on unemployment insurance. In other words, people are making more not to work than to work.

CBO says: "Roughly five of every six recipients would receive benefits that exceeded the weekly amounts they could expect to earn from work during those months" if you were to extend this until the end of the year.

In other words, they are saying that 80 percent of UI recipients would make more on unemployment insurance than they would have at their old jobs—meaning that if you followed where the Democratic negotiators are in keeping \$600 in place until the end of the year, there would be an unprecedented disincentive to go to work in this country.

I think that is widely acknowledged. The University of Chicago has a study that isn't quite 80 percent; it says 68 percent, though. I don't think anybody disputes the fact that most people on unemployment insurance are making more than they would if they were at work.

When I talk to my Democratic colleagues about that, they are hearing the same thing I am hearing from small business owners—by the way, from nonprofits, from employers of all sizes and all stripes—saying that it is tough to get people to come back to work when they can make more on unemployment insurance by not working.

I think a lot of my Democratic colleagues agree. It is good to get people back to work—get back to work safely, yes, and we ought to be sure that the employers are following the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and others. But it is good to get people back to work because then they are reconnected with their healthcare, if they have it, with their retirement savings, and with training. That connection to work is a positive thing, providing people with dignity and self-respect. It comes with work, so we should all be for that.

Yet when you see what is happening in this negotiation, this is being stalled because Democrats are being intransigent. They are saying stubbornly: We are going to stick to \$600.

Today, there was a press conference with Speaker PELOSI and Democratic Leader SCHUMER, and that is exactly what they said. Here is the quote: "We have said that we are going to have \$600." This is necessary.

I know that that is not where the rank and file are here in this Chamber because I have talked to a number of my Democratic colleagues about this. They realize that the \$600—even those who thought it might have been necessary at the time, and I voted for the

package at a time when we had unemployment that was such a shock and so high, and people were in such need of immediate cash. But also I have heard, again, from so many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, that the \$600 is something they are hearing about more and more back home from the employers who say: We can't get people back to work.

So the \$600 is something that there needs to be some flexibility on to come up with a smarter way to ensure that people can continue to get a Federal supplement because we do continue to have relatively high unemployment in this country. In my own State of Ohio, there is almost 11 percent unemployment. But let's not have it be so much that people are incentivized not to work. That doesn't help anybody.

There are "Help Wanted" signs all over my State. I was at a Ford plant recently, where they have 25 percent absenteeism, which they attribute to this issue. I have been at a lot of small businesses, which is where probably most of my colleagues are hearing a lot of concerns about the fact that they can't get people who used to work for them to come back, and they certainly can't hire the new people they need, even though they are reopening safely and doing everything they are supposed to do in terms of the guidelines. They are having a tough time getting back to work.

There is an auto plant in Ohio where the white-collar workers are now working on the assembly line because they can't get enough workers who would normally have those jobs to work on the assembly line.

So this is a problem right now, and I think everybody acknowledges it except the Democratic negotiators in this negotiation.

Now, I don't think we are actually as far apart as the media accounts would suggest because there are lots of ideas out there. One idea, by the way, makes a lot of sense to me, and I am going to offer this in a moment as a resolution for the Senate to take up. I think this is the ultimate common sense—let's keep \$600 in place for now while we negotiate something. Let's have an extension for another week on the unemployment insurance at 600 bucks just so we can negotiate something. What you don't want is people to fall off the cliff, and that is starting to happen now.

The \$600 expired last Friday. So 6 days ago it expired, and 6 days ago, 7 days ago, MARTHA MCSALLY, a Senator from Arizona, came to this floor and offered this same unanimous consent request, saying: Let's just have 600 for another week. CHUCK SCHUMER, the Democratic leader, objected—instead, offering the \$3.5 trillion package from the House. But he didn't respond to why we wouldn't at least give the negotiators a week to come up with something.

So I am going to offer that same thing today because I do think it is not

fair to have a cliff. I don't think there should be a cliff. I think people should be able to have some level—but not at \$600 because that is now understood by everybody to mean that you are disincentivizing work.

Americans are a generous people. Back in 2008 and 2009, when we had the great recession, we also did this. By the way, we did \$25 a week then. So for Democrats who say this is unprecedented, well, we had 10 percent unemployment back then—very high unemployment—and we did \$25. I think we should do a lot more than that now but not so much that people are making more by not working than by working.

There are a lot of ideas out there. Again, my ideas—ideas of individual Members—may not be what this body chooses to use, and that is fine. We are not all going to get our way, but we should be able to come up with a compromise here.

My idea is to have a return-to-work bonus, so that you are getting the 600 bucks, but you can take some of that money back with you when you go back to work. That would create an incentive to get people back to work and connect people to those businesses as we talked about and the importance of doing that.

But there are other ideas as well. There is a plan that was put out recently by two Obama administration veterans, former Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner and economic adviser Jason Furman. They joined with a former H.W. Bush economist Glenn Hubbard to put out a proposal from of the Aspen Institute, hardly a conservative group, that proposes that the unemployment system—not at \$600 but to continue at a cap of \$400 and have it be determined based unemployment level for the State.

The way unemployment works in the States is the States have a benefit, and this Federal benefit is on top of it. Most States provide on average about 50 percent of benefits; \$600 is over 100 percent. It is over 130 percent, in fact. So this solution—again, from two Obama administration economists—is that you have \$400 as a cap, when unemployment in those States is above 15 percent and zero Federal supplement when the State is at 7 percent or less. It phases out entirely. That is one bipartisan solution that is out there. Instead of insisting on \$600, I would hope at least there is a discussion of those kinds of proposals.

Senator ROMNEY has a proposal out there that takes the amount from \$500 per week in August to \$400 to an 80-percent wage replacement phasing out altogether by year-end. Senator MCCONNELL put his proposal out for a \$200 amount over a 2-month period as a transition and then goes to a percent of wages. His percent of wages is 70 percent of wages. Again, there is no State that is that high. The States are 40 percent, 50 percent, 60 percent, in that range.

So there are ideas out there, and yet the Democrats keep coming back again

and again to this notion of: We want it all or nothing. I will state to my colleague from Oregon who is here on the floor, and I am glad he is—he did a very good job for Democrats negotiating this proposal. I told him about it at the time. I know he took pride on it, and he should have.

But we also need now to figure out where we go, going forward. None of us should want people to be disincentivized from going to work. We should not have a situation like we have now where, again, you have the leaders on the Democratic side, Speaker PELOSI and Democratic Leader SCHUMER, saying, “Today, we have said that we are going to have \$600. This is necessary.”

We have to be able to show some flexibility here to be able to break this impasse, to be able to provide for people who lost their jobs through no fault of their own and need some help, but not continue to have this policy in place that doesn't work for our economy, for small businesses, and for workers themselves. Let's get the politics out of this. Let's do something that makes sense to be able to move forward on this broader crisis, and I think if we can fix the unemployment insurance issue, we are likely to get there.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Will my colleague from Ohio yield?

Mr. PORTMAN. I would be happy to yield.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I want to thank the Senator from Ohio for his great leadership on this and so many other issues. I see my colleague from Oregon is on the floor as well.

I want to talk about an issue that Senator PORTMAN just touched on, but it is really the key to what is going on here, and that it is good faith. Are negotiations happening in good faith? Or are they not?

Sometimes, it is hard to tell. Sometimes, there is posturing, but, last week at this time, Senator PORTMAN, Senator MCSALLY, and myself were on the floor with regard to discussing Senator MCSALLY's very simple unanimous consent resolution which said as we negotiate—hopefully, in good faith—the difference between what we have put forward—the HEALS Act—and the Speaker Pelosi bill from early May—a bit of a stale \$4 trillion bill, one-third of which has nothing to do with the pandemic—but as we are trying to negotiate in good faith, let's move forward with an extension of unemployment so people who are hurting can continue to rely on it. That happens all the time in the Senate.

So what happened? The minority leader came down to the Senate floor and blocked it. He blocked it, and his response was: I am going to block this 1-week extension unless the Republicans take the entire \$4-trillion Heroes Act. That is what he said. If you are watching or paying attention, that is

the definition of not negotiating in good faith, and every Senator knows it. All 100 of us know it. That was not a good faith maneuver.

What I predicted was the minority leader of the U.S. Senate, despite that maneuver which is going to hurt millions of Americans, did it because he thinks the national media will give him a pass, that no one in the national media will say: Boy, oh boy, the minority leader just blocked a reasonable request for an extension to help people.

But he thinks, and I think with good reason, that the national media won't blame him for what he just did, so he did it with no explanation. That is not good faith. By definition, coming down saying, Take my \$4 trillion package or you won't get a 1-week extension of unemployment, that is not good faith.

Let me mention one other point which Senator PORTMAN mentioned. Now, on this tough issue of unemployment insurance—and Senator PORTMAN has been a leader on this—I was talking to some of my Democratic colleagues about them today.

By the way, most of them don't believe that \$600 until January is a good idea for the reasons Senator PORTMAN mentioned.

Again, to have the minority leader of the U.S. Senate and Speaker PELOSI just say: 600 bucks, take it or leave it? Colleagues, you all know—we all know—that is not good faith. That is not good faith.

It is starting to feel like the minority leader and the Speaker are not negotiating in good faith right now. I hope they are—I know a lot of my Democratic colleagues are—but people have to remember, regardless of what party you are in, Americans are hurting. They need help. We have one foot in the recovery, one foot still in the pandemic. But what we need as we negotiate this package is good faith.

So I want to thank my colleague from Ohio again for his strong leadership on this and so many other issues. I am certainly going to be supportive of unanimous consent requests which we made at this time just last week to help people—not controversial, a week extension as we negotiate. It happens all the time here in the Senate.

I certainly hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are not going to say, No, take my whatever, or we are not going to do it, because it doesn't look or feel like good faith. Do you know who is hurting by that? Do you know who is being hurt by that? The American people, who are suffering.

Mr. PORTMAN. I thank my colleague from Alaska.

Reclaiming my time, I think he has made a good point. We are not talking about a negotiation here. We are talking about a weeklong extension of the existing \$600 per week, so we could enable people to have some certainty and predictability on lives.

I have heard from folks back home on unemployment asking: What are you doing? Why can't you come to an agreement?

We talked about why. The Democrats don't seem interested about moving off their proposal, and they said it again today. Maybe they think this is good politics—maybe they think this is something worth hurting these people who are looking, to see if I am going to get my unemployment or not.

I had a tele-townhall last night with a woman whose husband works in the hospitality business, and he has lost his job, and everybody else in that business has told him: Sorry, we are not open for business. He does need the help. She didn't insist on \$600, but she said: Give us some certainty that something will go forward.

So that is what this is about. This is just to say give us a week at \$600, the full amount, in order to negotiate something that makes more sense for the economy, for small businesses, and for workers. This MARTHA MCSALLY motion which was offered earlier this week and last week, we are going to offer today. It is a unanimous consent.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the bill at the desk; I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, the Senate Republicans have spent much of this week offering this idea of a 1-week extension of the \$600 unemployment insurance supplement. They have done this as an alternative to spending the week doing real negotiating, which is what I and many Senate Democrats have been calling for, for not just days but weeks and weeks—literally, months—as we called for an advanced proposal.

In my view, the only thing worse than what the Republicans have done, cutting off desperately needed unemployment insurance to millions of families and communities, would be to allow a bill to pass that promises money without actually delivering it. That is snake oil, and I am going to be very specific in describing why that is the case.

Even if this short-term extension were to pass, experts and State agencies have said in very clear terms that States don't have enough time to reprogram their systems and avoid a lapse in benefits. A lot of them just have, as my colleague from Ohio knows—I was talking about it for days in the Finance Committee room—that these State unemployment systems are not equipped to switch the benefits on and off. These short-term extensions won't work and don't work administratively.

Nobody following this debate has to take my word for it. That is what the National Association of State Workforce Agencies have said.

I think there was a comment about, well, this is an image problem. It is a

problem of the national media. Well, I would say, colleagues, the national media has been repeating what I just said, which are the exact views of people who aren't Democrats or Republicans, they are the administrators of this crucial program.

A short-term extension isn't enough for the hard-working Americans relying on this lifeline who don't have jobs to go back to. What about next week and the week after? There is going to be promises for week after week that also can't get the money to people so they can make rent and buy groceries.

The only responsible route is to agree to the extension that really looks to economic conditions, ties these benefits to economic conditions and then lower the payments only when it is appropriate to do so, and that means when the economy is in recovery, not when it is facing the kind of dramatic contraction that we all were so concerned about last week.

To me, this is all part of an effort to deflect the fact that when I—and I am just going to talk about myself specifically—but Senator SCHUMER, the Speaker sent letter after letter calling for negotiations because everybody knew there was a cliff. I said it repeatedly. I said: Don't go home, Leader MCCONNELL. Stay here. This cliff is coming, end of July, last weekend, when people got the checks.

So there was a comment about unemployed folks being pushed off the cliff. Well, I am here to tell you, it was Senate Republicans by their inaction who pushed those workers off the cliff.

Now, what is needed is a long-term solution that ensures the extra \$600 remains available for as long as this devastating crisis continues.

I heard my colleagues talk about workers. A lot of workers who were laid off once and then brought back have been laid off again. That is really representative of the challenge.

I also want to mention, as we talk about ideas—I heard my colleagues talk about it—another big snake oil idea coming out of the White House that somehow an Executive order is going to accomplish all of this. We hear the words "Executive order." That sounds like it is going to be fast. Man, that sounds good. Executive order; let's move fast. In actuality, it would throw the States in chaos. It would be tied up in the courts. It would slow everything down, just like each of the Senate Republican legislative proposals so far. For example, they all still try to drive the idea of wage replacement. We have seen problems with getting the amount out initially, the \$600. Wait until you see what happens with the Republican wage proposals.

There is a path here, and that is to negotiate in good faith. My Republican colleagues have been stalling on negotiating in good faith because they thought somehow—and I find this a real head-scratcher—they could win a war of words by insulting the American worker and claiming that they are

kind of lazy, that they don't want to work and the like.

I will tell you, on the Finance Committee, I hear continually from my friend from Ohio who talks about the superior work ethic of Ohioans. Now he is out here talking about how everybody is not willing to work and unemployment benefits are causing folks to stay home rather than work because they are too generous. I think that is just a bunch of hogwash. I believe Americans believe deeply in the dignity of work.

We just had a nationwide townhall meeting about the unemployment issue, and people were saying: I can't believe they are calling us lazy and saying we don't want to work. I get a job offer on Monday night, and I will be up there at the crack of dawn on Tuesday.

That is what workers are saying. So this idea that they are staying home because they don't want to work—besides, it is a violation of the rules of the program as well—I think is just hogwash.

I would also like to put into the RECORD right now the latest assessment from the Bureau of Labor Statistics about what is really going on out here, because the issue is not workers being lazy; the issue is scarcity of jobs. The Bureau of Labor Statistics—again, not a political operation—has reported that there are four unemployed Americans for every job out there. Let me repeat that. Not politicians. Not anecdotes. Not somebody who said something to somebody else. Those are the facts, colleagues. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that there are four unemployed Americans for every job out there.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the Bureau of Labor Statistics analysis showing the paucity of jobs.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED PERSONS PER JOB OPENING, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED

Month	Number of unemployed persons per job opening
May 2005	2.0
June 2005	1.8
July 2005	1.7
Aug 2005	1.8
Sept 2005	1.7
Oct 2005	1.8
Nov 2005	1.8
Dec 2005	1.8
Jan 2006	1.6
Feb 2006	1.7
Mar 2006	1.5
Apr 2006	1.4
May 2006	1.5
June 2006	1.5
July 2006	1.6
Aug 2006	1.5
Sept 2006	1.4
Oct 2006	1.4
Nov 2006	1.5
Dec 2006	1.5
Jan 2007	1.5
Feb 2007	1.5
Mar 2007	1.4
Apr 2007	1.4
May 2007	1.4
June 2007	1.4
July 2007	1.5
Aug 2007	1.5
Sept 2007	1.5

NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED PERSONS PER JOB OPENING, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED—Continued

Month	Number of unemployed persons per job opening
Oct 2007	1.5
Nov 2007	1.6
Dec 2007	1.7
Jan 2008	1.7
Feb 2008	1.8
Mar 2008	1.9
Apr 2008	1.9
May 2008	2.0
June 2008	2.2
July 2008	2.4
Aug 2008	2.5
Sept 2008	2.9
Oct 2008	3.0
Nov 2008	3.3
Dec 2008	3.7
Jan 2009	4.4
Feb 2009	4.5
Mar 2009	5.3
Apr 2009	5.9
May 2009	5.6
June 2009	5.8
July 2009	6.4
Aug 2009	6.3
Sept 2009	6.0
Oct 2009	6.3
Nov 2009	6.3
Dec 2009	6.1
Jan 2010	5.3
Feb 2010	5.7
Mar 2010	5.7
Apr 2010	4.8
May 2010	4.9
June 2010	5.1
July 2010	4.6
Aug 2010	4.8
Sept 2010	5.0
Oct 2010	4.5
Nov 2010	4.8
Dec 2010	4.8
Jan 2011	4.5
Feb 2011	4.3
Mar 2011	4.2
Apr 2011	4.2
May 2011	4.3
June 2011	4.0
July 2011	3.7
Aug 2011	4.1
Sept 2011	3.7
Oct 2011	3.7
Nov 2011	3.8
Dec 2011	3.6
Jan 2012	3.3
Feb 2012	3.6
Mar 2012	3.2
Apr 2012	3.3
May 2012	2.2
June 2012	3.2
July 2012	3.3
Aug 2012	3.2
Sept 2012	3.1
Oct 2012	3.2
Nov 2012	3.2
Dec 2012	3.2
Jan 2013	3.2
Feb 2013	3.0
Mar 2013	2.9
Apr 2013	2.9
May 2013	2.8
June 2013	2.8
July 2013	2.9
Aug 2013	2.7
Sept 2013	2.7
Oct 2013	2.6
Nov 2013	2.7
Dec 2013	2.6
Jan 2014	2.5
Feb 2014	2.4
Mar 2014	2.4
Apr 2014	2.1
May 2014	2.1
June 2014	1.9
July 2014	2.0
Aug 2014	1.8
Sept 2014	1.9
Oct 2014	1.8
Nov 2014	1.9
Dec 2014	1.8
Jan 2015	1.7
Feb 2015	1.6
Mar 2015	1.6
Apr 2015	1.5
May 2015	1.6
June 2015	1.6
July 2015	1.3
Aug 2015	1.5
Sept 2015	1.5
Oct 2015	1.4
Nov 2015	1.4
Dec 2015	1.4
Jan 2016	1.3
Feb 2016	1.3
Mar 2016	1.3
Apr 2016	1.4
May 2016	1.3
June 2016	1.3
July 2016	1.3
Aug 2016	1.4
Sept 2016	1.4

NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED PERSONS PER JOB OPENING, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED—Continued

Month	Number of unemployed persons per job opening
Oct 2016	1.4
Nov 2016	1.3
Dec 2016	1.3
Jan 2017	1.3
Feb 2017	1.3
Mar 2017	1.2
Apr 2017	1.2
May 2017	1.2
June 2017	1.1
July 2017	1.1
Aug 2017	1.1
Sept 2017	1.1
Oct 2017	1.0
Nov 2017	1.1
Dec 2017	1.1
Jan 2018	1.0
Feb 2018	1.0
Mar 2018	0.9
Apr 2018	0.9
May 2018	0.9
June 2018	0.9
July 2018	0.8
Aug 2018	0.9
Sept 2018	0.8
Oct 2018	0.8
Nov 2018	0.8
Dec 2018	0.9
Jan 2019	0.9
Feb 2019	0.9
Mar 2019	0.8
Apr 2019	0.8
May 2019	0.8
June 2019	0.8
July 2019	0.8
Aug 2019	0.8
Sept 2019	0.8
Oct 2019	0.8
Nov 2019	0.9
Dec 2019	0.9
Jan 2020	0.8
Feb 2020	0.8
Mar 2020	1.2
Apr 2020	4.6
May 2020	3.9

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Mr. WYDEN. I will just say that I am stunned that colleagues are saying that American workers are out trying to scam the system and really don't want to work and all of these things that I think suggest a very different picture than what I hear from workers and, by the way, what I hear from my friend from Ohio when he is in the Finance Committee.

I have a final point. The Republicans knew the cliff was coming in May when the House passed the Heroes Act. They knew the cliff was coming in June. I am just going to walk this through because I heard: Oh my goodness, all of the Democrats are involved in pushing workers off the cliff.

The Republicans knew the cliff was coming in May. That is when the House passed their bill. They knew the cliff was coming a few weeks after that when Senator SCHUMER and I introduced and tried to get passed a piece of legislation that was really based, I say to my friend from Ohio—and something I heard our friend from South Dakota, Senator THUNE, talk about—Senator THUNE said: You know, I get it. When folks are hurting, the benefits have to be used to pay the rent and buy groceries. But when unemployment goes down, the benefit should taper down.

That is essentially what the Democratic leader, Senator SCHUMER, and I offered—to tie unemployment insurance to the realities of what is on the ground in the American economy.

Republicans knew the cliff was coming in May. They knew a few weeks later that Senator SCHUMER and I tried

to actually pass a bill that, as I developed it and brought it to our leadership and showed it to colleagues, was really to a great extent sparked by what our friend from South Dakota, a Member of the Republican leadership, said: Well, let's kind of recognize that when the economy gets better, the benefit tapers off.

Republicans knew the cliff was coming in July when again Leader SCHUMER and I tried to provide certainty for American families and communities by passing our bill. Did they come to the table with earnest proposals?

Senate Republicans have spent the week on this idea of a 1-week extension, which the people who run the programs—the people who are the most knowledgeable, who don't have election certificates, who are experts in the field—are saying would not deliver to the people who are desperate to buy groceries and pay rent. It would not deliver the funds they so desperately need for quite some time.

These proposals are not serious. They are political theater.

The cliff is here. As Americans families fall over it, I am just stunned that we are hearing Republicans say: You know, it is OK to offer these proposals.

I have seen a number in elevators, leaving town. I am going to be here. I am going to be here because I think when workers are hurting and they can't make rent and they can't pay groceries, you stay at it.

The Senator from Ohio knows that is how we got to \$600, because when Secretary Scalia folded his arms and said he couldn't really do anything that would present a real benefit, we spent 3 days—3 long days—and we said on our side: You are not going to stiff the workers, and we will just average the benefit. Some would get more, some would get less, but we would give everybody in America who, through no fault of their own, has been laid off a chance to pay the rent, buy groceries, and at the same time keep the economy afloat.

For all of those reasons, and especially reflecting my disappointment that after—and I just walked everybody through it—one effort to go and negotiate; a couple of weeks later, another effort; then in July, another effort. But nothing happened. In fact, I stood right where I am, as benefits were about to expire, and I said: How can the Republican leader basically say we are going home? When they asked him about moving anything to really meet the needs of the workers, the press reported—everybody was quoting the press—that the Republican leader laughed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, excuse me. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. PORTMAN. I was hoping after all that there wouldn't be an objection because I can't believe that my friend

from Oregon believes that it is not a good idea to do an extension. All we are talking about is an extension for a week of the \$600, the full amount, even though, again, all the data out there shows that amount is not practical for our economy, for workers, or for businesses.

He made a valiant effort trying to explain why he is not for that, but I know that people who are watching just think it is common sense. Let's continue to discuss, but let's be sure we have, as my colleague from Alaska said, good-faith negotiations. That is not good faith, to say \$600 or nothing. And that is exactly what the negotiators have said.

To my colleague from Oregon, I wish they would authorize you to negotiate. I think you and I could actually work out something, and I think you probably do too. But they have not authorized us, and the Democratic negotiators have said \$600 or nothing.

This notion that the 1-week extension just doesn't work—absolutely it works. Are you telling me that the State unemployment offices would not provide the \$600? Of course they would. There would be a lapse, of course. There would be a week or two, they say. But that \$600 would be in people's pockets.

By the way, there is a lapse right now, so people who lost their unemployment last Friday in some States, including Ohio, continue to get it because there is a lapse in the payment. So, yes, people would get the money. Of course they would get it. And they would be able to plan on it and have some certainty.

Frankly, if it hadn't been blocked last week when Senator MCSALLY stood right over here and offered it, it would be even sooner that people would get it. I say it is 1 to 2 weeks, so for some people, they would be getting it right now.

It is absolutely essential for us to figure out how to find a way forward here. It is not, to me, an option for us to do nothing. We can't allow this cliff to continue. But in the meantime, all we are saying is, let's just have a little time to work it out, and hopefully the Democrats will get off of their \$600 and realize that is not a path forward because it doesn't work.

You are right. When we put the \$600 in place, our thought was that would be about average. In other words, it would be the average wage replacement, so that you would have half the people making a little more and half the people making a little less. That is not how it worked out.

Again, the Congressional Budget Office—nonpartisan CBO—says that more than 80 percent of the UI recipients are going to make more on unemployment than they would at their old jobs, if you follow the Democratic proposal. In Chicago, 68 percent, but that is not what we intended. Certainly, we should be able to adjust here, and we should be able to get to yes.

My deep concern is that the negotiators are so intransigent on the Democratic side that we will end up hurting the very people Democrats are talking about helping.

Let's come up with a sensible solution. I think there is a path here, and it is to negotiate in good faith. I think an Executive order isn't necessary if we do our work. I think inaction by not negotiating in good faith is the worst possible outcome.

I yield to my colleague from Alaska. Mr. SULLIVAN. Thank you, Senator PORTMAN.

I have a lot of respect for my colleague from Oregon, who unfortunately just left the Senate floor, but there they go again. On the Senate floor, the Senator from Oregon just said "Republicans cut off unemployment insurance for millions of families" when, in reality, what we have just witnessed—if you are watching—on the Senate floor is that the Senator from Oregon objected to restoring unemployment benefits for millions of Americans. That is a fact. That is just what happened.

So he says one thing—and again, I think they get a little bit careless because they think the national media will just report what he says. But he said, "I object." When he said "I object," here is what he meant: I object to restoring unemployment benefits for millions of Americans. That is what the Senator from Oregon just did. There is no denying that. And right before he did it, he said that Republicans cut off unemployment for millions of Americans. That is just not true—not true.

He just objected to restoring unemployment benefits for a week—\$600 for millions of Americans—just like the Democratic leader from New York did last week. Then he said: "Short-term extensions are not enough." That is another quote from the Senator from Oregon, but he didn't finish the sentence by saying: And because I objected, they are going to get zero.

So think about that one. Short-term extensions are not enough—sounds good—so he objects so there are no extensions. Again, that is just what happened on the floor.

He didn't say one thing about this issue that Senator PORTMAN and I have been discussing, which is good-faith negotiations. There is not one Senator in this body who believes that when the Democratic leader comes to the floor of the Senate and says "take the \$4 trillion Speaker PELOSI bill passed in early May or nothing," that that is good faith. It is almost, by definition, bad faith.

So I think our colleagues, who are trying to negotiate in good faith but are getting locked down by their leadership, are having a bit of a problem because they know this isn't good faith, and they know people are suffering. That is why we have got to work together to get to an agreement, but what we cannot do and what I fear the other side is starting to do is use

people who are suffering as leverage in negotiations. That is not what we should be doing. We should be working in good faith to try to get to an agreement, and we should be making statements on the Senate floor that are actually factual.

What just happened here was that the Senator from Oregon objected to American citizens getting their unemployment benefits restored. That is a fact.

I yield the floor. Mr. PORTMAN. I yield back. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, before they leave the floor, I just want to compliment my colleagues from Alaska and Ohio on making a very important point. You would think, from the press, that there are negotiations taking place, but the truth is that Speaker PELOSI and the minority leader in the Senate, Senator SCHUMER, have shown zero interest in resolving the differences on this next COVID-19 package. I think it is just very important for my colleagues to lay out the facts because there is a tendency to ignore the facts in favor of a mythical or a fantasy construct, so I appreciate their statements.

Hopefully, sometime soon, now that the enhanced unemployment benefits have been allowed to expire as a result of Democratic objections and where the Paycheck Protection Program, which was the single most successful part of the CARES Act legislation that we passed, is likewise scheduled to terminate here soon, I hope Democratic negotiators will get serious about providing a fifth coronavirus relief package to support our country through this unprecedented crisis.

We are doing pretty well. During the previous legislation, we virtually passed these trillion-plus-dollar bills, multitrillion-dollar bills, essentially by unanimous vote because we knew we were in the middle of an emergency. We knew that it was not a time for politics; it was a time to try to help people who were out of work or needed help from our beleaguered healthcare providers.

So we rose to the occasion, previously, by bolstering our healthcare response, making testing free of charge, providing vital funding for our hospitals, and arming our medical workers with the personal protective equipment and other medical equipment they needed in order to sustain the fight. We have poured funding into the research and development of a vaccine, therapeutics, and treatments, which are coming along, and we are all hopeful an American company will win the global race for a vaccine in addition to these therapeutics.

The legislation we passed so far has buoyed the workers and families in need of financial assistance with direct payments, bolstered unemployment benefits, as well as conferred the ability to defer student loan payments

with no penalty, and we have supported our wobbly economy with assistance for Main Street businesses through the Paycheck Protection Program that I mentioned a moment ago and other loans for industries that our State and counties rely upon, as well as countless jobs.

While Republicans and Democrats were negotiating these bills in good faith, it was clear we had some different ideas about the best way to support our country through the crisis, but what mattered most was that we shared the same goal. At least we did then. I am beginning to doubt whether we share the same goal now. The goal then was to help people in distress, economically and from a public health standpoint. Now, it seems like Speaker PELOSI and the minority leader in the Senate are more interested in trying to score political points and use people who are in distress and anxious and fearful as hostages.

Well, it is really, really unacceptable. We should be strengthening our fight against the virus and supporting those harmed by economic impact and laying the foundation for a rebound of our economy, which was one of the strongest in my lifetime right before this pandemic hit.

Those remain my priorities today, as we navigate these uncharted waters and prepare to strengthen our fight at this crucial time, but the hangup in negotiations between Democrats and the administration seems to indicate that our Democratic colleagues have shifted course—or at least that Speaker PELOSI and Minority Leader SCHUMER have.

The majority of information we are learning about these negotiations is not coming from rank-and-file Members but from leaks and press conferences to the media about private meetings in Speaker PELOSI's office. From what I understand, it sounds like the Speaker and the minority leader have simply stiff-armed any offers that fall short of their ridiculous Heroes Act legislation that the Speaker and the House passed on a partisan basis a few weeks ago—that they knew at the time had no chance of becoming law.

This legislation was heralded by Speaker PELOSI and Minority Leader SCHUMER as the solution our country needs to defeat this virus, so let's talk about what is in it. For starters, the so-called Heroes Act is a massive tax cut for millionaires and billionaires. If the Heroes Act became law, the wealthiest people in New York and San Francisco would receive an average benefit of nearly \$60,000—\$60,000—higher than the household income for many Texans.

Well, this has nothing to do with COVID-19 or supporting those who are struggling to make ends meet. It is a handout to the people who need it least, at everyone else's expense. But that is only one line in the long list of absurdities in this legislation, the Heroes Act, that have absolutely nothing to do with the crisis at hand.

What is the Speaker's priority when it comes to COVID-19? Well, it is a soil health program, environmental justice grants, permanent changes in election law, and not one but two diversity studies in the marijuana industry.

POLITICO called this bill, at the time, a Democratic wish list filled with all the party's favorite policies. NPR, hardly a bastion of conservative communication, said it is a long wish list for Democrats. The New York Times—the New York Times—basically, a party organ for the Democrats, said the bill was more a messaging document than a viable piece of legislation. The reason they said that is because one-third of that bill is unrelated to the coronavirus.

It paid people more to stay home than to work. It sent checks to illegal immigrants. It bailed out poorly run States. It facilitated ballot harvesting, marijuana banking, and, as I said, tax breaks for coastal elites.

That stands in stark contrast to what we have proposed and what Leader MCCONNELL aptly summed up as kids, jobs, and healthcare. Those ought to be our priorities. As we discover our new normal that exists somewhere between the virus arriving in the United States and a vaccine being distributed, that is where we need to target our attention and our support.

That includes funding for educators who are in the process of planning the safest way to teach students in the fall and childcare for working parents who are heading back to the office. It includes helping the workers who had the rug pulled out from under them when our Democratic colleagues refused to continue bolstered unemployment benefits until these workers can get back to a steady paycheck.

Our bill included continued support for our war against the virus itself, both in hospitals and in research labs. These have been the main concerns in my recent conversations with my constituents in Texas, especially now that the bolstered unemployment benefits provided by the CARES Act have expired.

Since March, more than 3 million Texans have filed for unemployment benefits, and recipients have taken advantage of the additional \$600 a week. This additional income has helped families cover the rent, groceries, and other critical expenses until they are able to return to work, and for many workers there is still a great deal of uncertainty about when that might happen.

Well, it is clear, though, that that \$600 additional benefit had some unintended consequences. Frankly, we should have capped the amount that somebody could receive for unemployment benefits at their previous earning level, but, according to the Texas Workforce Commission, with the \$600 weekly benefit on top of the State benefit, 80 percent of the people receiving the unemployment insurance benefit were making more on unemployment

insurance than they were previously employed—80 percent.

That brings us to a point far beyond giving workers the financial support they need to stay afloat. Instead, the Federal Government is paying people not to work. That is the wrong incentive and, certainly, completely unnecessary. Payroll, wage substitution—yes. Paying people not to work—no.

A recent poll found that two-thirds of Americans believe that these enhanced benefits discourage people from going back to work, and they are right. Among unemployed Americans, nearly half say they would avoid returning to work if these benefits were extended.

The businesses in my State which closed their doors earlier this year have now had trouble hiring employees back because some 80 percent of those former employees are making more not working than they were working. If we were to extend that benefit through January, as the Heroes Act would, our economy would not recover, as we all need it to do.

So there is a delicate balance—but an important balance—between supporting those who need help until they can return to the workforce and giving them an incentive to avoid returning to work. This is not an all-or-nothing approach. It is not 600 bucks or bust, even though that is the way Speaker PELOSI and Minority Leader SCHUMER like to put it.

We can and we should begin and continue to supplement State unemployment benefits and give workers the income they need to support their families without paying people more to stay home than to work. It is not rocket science.

We are all anxiously waiting for the Speaker and the minority leader to wake up and start focusing on the task at hand, which is on commonsense policies that support our country through this crisis. Texans don't have time to wait for the posturing or the politicking and the grandstanding, not to mention the heel-dragging. They don't have an interest in knowing how diverse the marijuana business is, and they don't want to provide a massive tax break to the richest Americans on the east coast at the expense of everyone else.

My constituents want to be able to feed their families; they want to be able to work; they want to be able to pay their rent; and they want to know their kids will be healthy as the school year begins.

I implore our colleagues, Speaker PELOSI, and Minority Leader SCHUMER to drop the games, quit hurting people you claim to champion, and pay attention to what America really needs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I want to thank my good friend and colleague from Texas for laying out the choice before us and highlighting, again, this issue of good-faith negotiations, which hopefully we are starting

to see, but last week we didn't see; and he talked about the so-called Heroes Act passed in May—so quite stale.

I will say one other element of that that was shocking and has been shocking to me is, there is a whole section on clawing back CARES Act money that went to Alaska Natives. The Heroes Act, the Pelosi \$4 trillion bill, has a section that targets expressly about 20 percent of the population of my State—and my State only. By the way, they are amazing, patriotic people who have been through pandemics before and have suffered horrendously during these pandemics. The Heroes Act targets them and says any money that Native Alaskan organizations have received—by the way, organizations, regional and village corporations set up by Congress—any money they have received will be clawed back in the Heroes Act. Of course, I am never going to let that bill pass—ever—on this floor. It is an outrage.

They need to get more serious about these negotiations, and the “take it or leave it” on the \$4 trillion Pelosi bill that specifically targets some of the most patriotic Americans in the country, who happen to be my constituents—Alaska Natives—is never going to fly. Never.

TRIBUTE TO JULIA BEVINS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, it is Thursday, and it is a time that I get to come to the Senate floor and recognize an Alaskan who has made a difference in my State and, in this case, someone who has made a difference literally around the globe. This is someone I refer to as the “Alaskan of the Week.” I love to do it. I know some of our reporters listening enjoy this.

Kristin, I know you love bears, so this week you will be particularly interested.

Before I get into the bears and the story and the individual we are going to honor today, let me tell you a little bit about what is happening in Alaska. Like other places in our great Nation, our State is certainly facing challenges—like the rest of America, one foot in our economic recovery, one foot still in this pandemic. It is a challenging time, but Alaskans are tough—certainly some of the toughest people in America. As I say, tough times don't last, but tough people do. We will get through this as a State, as a nation, and I think that certainly applies to Alaska.

It is summer. The Sun is high. The salmon are running thick. The bears are digging them out of the streams. By the way, a word to the wise: When you have salmon, you almost always have bears, so be careful.

In Alaska, we love our bears and so does our Alaskan of the Week, Julia Bevins, who recently moved from Anchorage to the gorgeous town of Homer—Homer, AK. For those of you who have been there, you know what I am talking about. For those who

haven't, you have to get out to Homer. It is the halibut capital of the world but a magnificently beautiful place. Just the drive from Anchorage to Homer is breathtaking. There is no other place in the world like it.

It is from Homer that Julia keeps going the now world-renowned foundation, the international Bear Conservation Fund, which is part of the International Association of Bear Research and Management, or IBA, that she and her late husband, wildlife biologist John Bevins, founded.

Why the foundation and why the bears? Let me tell you about a tragic and beautiful story relating to Julia and her late husband John.

Julia was born in New Mexico and raised in Australia. She has a degree in veterinary science from the University of Queensland in Australia. She came to Alaska in 1984 to get a Ph.D. in wildlife biology at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Her focus was on reindeer herd health and disease control.

She met John in 1985, and the two were married in Fairbanks in July, 1990. They were both in love with Alaska and with each other. It was the love of a lifetime, Julia said.

Indeed, it was a great match. She was a veterinarian focusing on reindeer. He was a wildlife biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, working on polar bear research—the best wildlife biologist job you could ever have, polar bear research in Alaska.

Then, unfortunately, tragedy struck. Three months after they were married, on October 11, John and his colleague George Menkens, and their pilot, Clifford Minch, got into a twin engine aero commander at Deadhorse. They were headed north to do a low-altitude aerial survey of female polar bears with cubs who prowl the ice hunting for food.

They were believed to have traveled as far as 250 miles northwest of Barrow, now known as Utqiaqvik—the northernmost point of North America. That is where people believe the plane they were traveling on vanished. No one really knows where.

The search, at least initially, was extensive. In the first few days, members of the U.S. Coast Guard flew C-130s, as well as civilians in their aircraft, and spanned the area, flying hundreds of thousands of square miles looking for any signs of the aircraft. After a week, they decided the search was over. Julia was desperate. She knew that her late husband and the two others had 2 weeks of provisions and adequate survival gear. What if they had survived? What if they were on an icefloe? What if they were still out there and the searchers happened to miss them in that huge expanse?

This idea was overwhelming to her. She called everyone she knew to help in keeping the search going. And eventually, like so many Alaskans did, she called the late great Senator Ted Stevens, who—as he was known to do—got to work for his fellow Alaskan.

“He did an amazing thing,” Julia said. He arranged for the Canadians to send a military radar plane that could detect metal above sea ice—anything bigger than a 4-foot square. The plane could cover an area the size of Manitoba in 1 night. So they did it.

It was that search that finally gave Julia peace of mind. She said: After the military plane came and left, I felt like we had done everything we could have possibly done to find my husband. I knew my husband was gone, and there was a peace of mind going forward.

Senator Ted Stevens gave me a life, she said. He gave me a life free from self-recrimination and free of doubt.

She also credits Senator Stevens for giving her enough peace to work to honor her husband's memory in a way that was unique to him. She took the proceeds she received from the insurance, and she began the bear foundation. It started off small in 1993. The first year it was up and running, the foundation gave away \$5,000 in grant money. That money, which was invested well, began to grow and so did the amount of the grants awarded.

One year, the foundation was able to give out \$50,000 in grant money. The average size of individual grants is now \$8,000. All told, they are able to give about \$100,000 a year, including donations that they get from individuals and organizations.

It is not just about the money that has grown, so has the prestige of this foundation. The IBA now has 550 members from over 60 countries. Because of Julia Bevins, in Homer, AK, all across the globe, researchers are working with other biologists. They are tracking bears. They are assisting in management of these great animals. They are writing papers and sharing information. They are doing what they love for the ecosystem. Julia said:

When people love bears, they love them with their whole heart and soul. It's a very profound thing.

Julia talked about how the IBA funded a researcher to search for a rumored small brown bear—the Gobi bear—in Mongolia, the only bear to exist in this extreme desert habitat. There had been sightings throughout the year, but no scientist had ever been able to prove its existence.

The IBA funded a scientist, Harry Reynolds—an Alaska from Fairbanks—to travel through Mongolia and find the Gobi bear. And he found them. Now the Mongolian Government is committed to its protection.

Scientists funded by the IBA worked with other scientists in Iran to document not only bears, but they were able to find 16 new wildlife species. From the dangerous border between India and Pakistan to the equally dangerous forests of Colombia, bear researchers, helped with IBA money, are working with local citizens and governments and other scientists, forming true alliances to help save bears.

Science ties the world together, Julia said. When you have a collective of