

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

like-minded people working for a common goal, all things are possible.

When you have someone with a mission like Julia Bevens, all things are possible too.

Thank you to Julia for your commitment to this great cause, for your work in helping keep John's memory alive, and for your amazing work on bears in Alaska and bears in the world. Congratulations on being our Alaskan of the Week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

CORONAVIRUS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, it is Thursday afternoon, and it looks like any other Thursday afternoon. There is no sense of urgency. The leader, Senator MCCONNELL, has sent folks on their way for the weekend, and there is no agreement on the COVID-19 survival package, which is what it really is for so many families.

We are in a situation where it is another week of not focusing on how we get unemployment extension passed or how we deal with hungry families or make sure people are going to have a roof over their head or support our small businesses or our small family farms or our first responders on the frontlines and others in cities and towns and in States who are providing public services essential to us—people who are in jobs who may lose their jobs if we can't get them the support they need.

That is not happening. There are a few nominations—a couple of nominations of judges. Let's put a few more ideologically extreme, rightwing judges on the bench. No sense of urgency. We are here on a Thursday as if it were just regular business.

Over 2 months ago, Senator MCCONNELL said he felt no sense of urgency to act on what the House passed, no sense of urgency at all. Over 2½ months ago, the House of Representatives passed a critical survival package to continue to tackle the pandemic, including testing, supporting our hospitals and nurses and doctors and communities on the frontline who are trying to maintain, manage, and keep us safe—save lives.

Senator MCCONNELL said he felt no sense of urgency. He certainly has demonstrated no sense of urgency since that time. He is not even in the negotiations that are going on right now.

But this isn't a regular Thursday for folks in Michigan. No. This isn't a regular Thursday, like "Ho-hum, let's go home for the weekend or longer." We have 1.8 million people on unemployment benefits. By the way, we don't have 1.8 million jobs right now that they could get. These aren't folks who just don't want to work. The jobs aren't there because of what has happened with the pandemic and the necessary closures and the challenges going on for businesses large and small.

We certainly want to support them to safely be able to reopen, but we have 1.8 million people who, this week—this Friday, as opposed to last Friday—this Friday, tomorrow, when they get help through unemployment, it is going to be about a 60-percent cut—6-0, not 6—a 60-percent cut. Their rent didn't go down 60 percent. Their food didn't go down 60 percent. Their utility bills didn't go down 60 percent. The other things they need to take care of their families didn't go down 60 percent. But their income is going down 60 percent because there is no sense of urgency in this Senate.

The Republican majority sees no sense of urgency. It is just another Thursday afternoon. There is no sense of urgency to help people who are trying to figure out what to do right now because everything collapsed when the pandemic hit and their business closed or other challenges took over so they are not able to work right now. What are they going to do? It is not just another Thursday afternoon for them.

It is not just another Thursday afternoon for the single mom of two kids in Michigan right now who, frankly, could very well be deciding whether she eats tonight because it is so important that the children eat. She can't do both, so she will go hungry one more time so the kids can eat. We have a hunger emergency in this country right now. It is not just another Thursday for those folks, although they have spent too many Thursdays feeling hungry.

It is not just a Thursday for the person who, right now, is probably in their car—maybe they have been there 2, 3, 4 hours—waiting in the food bank line to get some groceries to take home. They used to donate to the food bank, and now they are in a situation in which they have to go to the food bank. They never thought in their wildest dreams that would happen, yet it has. They feel a sense of urgency.

It is not just another Thursday afternoon in the Senate for them. They feel a sense of urgency for today and tomorrow and Saturday and Sunday and Monday and on into however long it is going to take to be able to bring our colleagues together.

It would be humorous if it just weren't so outrageous to hear colleagues talk about how we need to get something done when the House of Representatives passed a bill 2½ month ago, the Heroes Act. It came over here and has just been gathering dust on Senator MCCONNELL's desk.

We know that negotiation takes time. We know you always have to compromise, and that should have started 2 months ago or a month ago, not after somebody is losing 60 percent of their income trying to hold it together for their family.

By the way, we tell people to go home—shelter at home—but their rental protections go away, their mortgage protections go away, and you put more people on the street. That makes a lot of sense in the middle of a health pan-

demic when we want people to stay home.

Every move that has happened in this Senate since the House acted has been too little too late, and it is causing more and more devastating consequences as a result of that.

I will tell you who doesn't think it is another Thursday, just a normal Thursday afternoon, is 85-year-old retirees I know who are trying to figure out how to get their medicine versus their groceries. By the way, they haven't been out of their house in over 4 months. They are trying to stay connected with their families but are terrified of what is happening. Will what is happening right now be the rest of their life? They certainly feel a sense of urgency for us to act.

The moms and dads who want their kids to go back to school safely and are trying to figure it out are saying: Come on. This cannot be my child's education versus their safety. It has to be both.

That is not exactly rocket science. It has to be both.

I am excited about the Tigers playing now—and their baseball league—and I am excited about the NFL. But if those guys can get tested every day, why can't our teachers? Where are the priorities here? Do they feel a sense of urgency?

I can tell you that my son and daughter and their families and my grandkids feel an incredible sense of urgency. They want to go back to school to see their friends. They want to do it safely. They know it has to be safe. It is not either-or. They feel a sense of urgency. They would love this to be just another Thursday afternoon when we end the week and everybody goes home. It is not that for them as they are trying to figure out where they go for childcare or their school.

It certainly isn't just another regular day for the teachers trying to figure out what to do. They went into teaching because they love children. They want to teach. They also know they may have their own preexisting conditions. They also have their own children at home. They have to think about their own exposure and how they can be teaching, which they want to do, but it has to be done safely because of all the other issues in their lives as well.

I think about the small business owner. We have so many in Michigan. We have the most incredible entrepreneurs in Michigan in every small town as well as in big cities. There are people who poured their hearts and souls and capital and second mortgage on the house and maxed out their credit cards to have the small business they wanted. They are certainly not happy it is just another Thursday afternoon ending the week in the Senate. They are desperate to know how to keep their doors open and the three employees on the payroll. We have done some good work in a bipartisan way on that, which needs to continue.