

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

When you have someone with a mission like Julia Bevins, 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.

Yet that small business person and the people I talk to in Michigan feel an incredible sense of urgency.

I talk to our family farmers who work night and day, battling the weather and low prices and chaotic trade policies. I have talked to someone raising livestock who can't find a processor that they need right now to make the food for hungry families. They certainly feel a tremendous sense of urgency.

The reality is that there are millions of people across this country who don't understand what is not happening here—why there is no sense of urgency, why there hasn't been a willingness to come together. Why didn't it happen 2½ months ago? What is going on? It appears that too many people don't care.

This is the United States of America. We are one of the wealthiest nations in the world. We invented the assembly line. We put our footprints on the Moon. We are seeing what is happening today. We should never have gotten to this point right now where people are losing 60 percent of their income on unemployment benefits, are hungry trying to feed their kids, worried about losing the roof over their head or their small business or the family farm. We should never have gotten to this point, but here we are.

It has been more than 80 days since the House passed the Heroes Act—more than 80 days. Since that time, our essential workers, who deserve hazard pay, have been waiting. Those providing public services in our cities and towns and in States have been waiting for the support they need so that they don't lose their job and we don't lose those public services. Our businesses, our schools, our farmers all have been waiting, waiting, waiting. The reality is it is because it is just another Thursday—just another Thursday afternoon in the U.S. Senate.

Senator MCCONNELL has made it very clear that they are just going to have to wait some more. Right now, we should be voting on an important survival package for people in our country. We should be investing whatever it takes to manage and get our arms around this virus, do the testing, provide the healthcare, remain laser focused on getting vaccines. People should have confidence that everything humanly possible is being done and that there is a sense of urgency here.

I feel a sense of urgency. My Democratic colleagues feel the sense of urgency. Through the actions on this floor, we do not see that the Senate Republican majority feels the sense of urgency that every single person in Michigan feels right now.

We need to take action. People are tired of waiting. They can't afford to wait any longer. This is about their lives and their livelihoods. People need help. The Congress, working with the President, needs to provide that help, and there is no excuse not to act.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

CORONAVIRUS

MR. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, here we are—another Thursday afternoon in the Senate. It is pretty quiet around here. It is amazing how quickly this place gets quiet when the Senate majority leader, the Republican leader, Senator MCCONNELL, tells people: We don't have any more work to do today. By the way, we don't have any more work to do tomorrow, Friday. By the way, don't worry about Saturday or Sunday. Monday, you know, I will be here, says the Majority leader, but the Senate doesn't need to be here doing its work—maybe not Tuesday or Wednesday either.

I want to thank the Senator from Michigan, Ms. STABENOW, for being down here, standing up for working men and women and families and small businesses because, for them, it is not business as usual. It is not business as usual for all the folks who are out of work.

Thirty million Americans are on unemployment insurance, but here in the Senate, for the Senate majority leader, it is business as usual. Take a day off. Take the weekend off. Be on standby next week. Maybe we will start doing something real.

I can tell you the coronavirus is not on standby. The coronavirus is not taking a day off or 2 days off. It is continuing to spread in many parts of the country. We don't have enough testing equipment. We are not able to test people quickly. It takes people days and days and days and, in some cases, weeks to get their results.

We hear the President of the United States saying he wants to open up the economy and open up schools. We all want to open up the economy. We all want our children back in school, for classrooms are the best place for learning. But do you know what? You can't just wish for that to happen, just like you can't wish for the coronavirus to go away, and that makes it go away. You need to do real work. You need the testing equipment so that we can test people in realtime and make sure that we prevent further outbreaks. We don't want bonfires to turn into brush fires to turn into prairie fires. You need to catch the virus and contain it. You can't do that if you don't have testing equipment.

So the virus is not taking a day off or 2 or 3 or a week, and we shouldn't either. This Senate needs to do its job. We are in the middle of a pandemic. This is not a normal August. This should not be business as usual, and as Senator STABENOW said, we should not be here, at this moment, with important protections having already expired. This Senate sat by and did nothing while the protections against evictions expired. The eviction moratorium that was protecting millions of Americans—gone. The extra \$600 a week in

unemployment—gone. Yet here we are with the majority leader saying: Take Friday off. Take Saturday off. Business as usual.

Well, that is a difficult thing to tell families and workers and small businesses around the country, and it cannot be business as usual.

The House of Representatives passed the Heroes Act more than 2½ months ago. It realized that after we passed the CARES Act in a bipartisan way, important protections were going to expire, and it acted. The House made sure it passed legislation to extend the enhanced unemployment of \$600 a week. It passed legislation to extend the eviction moratorium. It provided additional food assistance for our kids. It provided important funds for rental assistance, which not only helps tenants stay in their apartments and homes but provides the payments to the landlords so the landlords can make the payments to the people they owe money to and on up the economic food chain.

The House did all of that, and what did the Senate do for 2½ months? Nothing. Nothing. It is like a train is heading right for you, and you stand in the middle of the tracks until it hits you when any commonsense person would do what the House of Representatives did, which was to take action to make sure that we didn't cross these deadlines and cause unnecessary harm to millions of American families, workers, and small businesses. That is what the Senate has done.

Now, even after we are into those deadlines—we have crossed those deadlines—what does the majority leader here, the Republican leader, say? Take tomorrow off. Take the weekend off. Take Monday off. In fact, the Senate may not come in for a while. I mean, we will come in, but there will be no voting, no real business.

Let me tell you what I am hearing from my constituents, because I know it is not different from what other Members are hearing from theirs. Here is a letter I received from a single mom.

I live . . . with my 15-year-old son as a single mother. I am asking for your help in voting to extend the \$600 Federal unemployment benefit. I understand a lot of politicians do not want this extended due to the thought that the benefit is too great and will prevent Marylanders from wanting to return back to work, in that they make more money from staying at home off of the State/government this way. Now, we all know, if your job calls you back during this time and you choose not to return, your benefits are going to be cut off anyway.

As for me, I am losing thousands of dollars each month being out of work and am barely scraping by as it is now with the extra \$600. I desperately WANT TO RETURN to work and make my regular salary, which is more. I am very thankful for the extra \$600 a week and have no idea how I would have survived without it during this time. I have zero other means to any money or credit. I have been able to pay my rent, feed my son, and pay some bills. I have deferred my car payment until August and am behind on car insurance. I am desperately asking for your help