

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NATIONAL DEBT

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, in the beginning of September, the Congressional Budget Office issued its latest budget outlook. The news wasn't good. CBO announced that next year our country's debt is projected to exceed the amount of our gross domestic product. In other words, the size of our debt will be greater than the size of our economy. That is a very bad position to be in.

Countries with that kind of debt-to-GDP ratio face time-sensitive decisions if they want to avert an all-out economic crisis. Greece is just one recent example. We all know the kind of economic devastation and accompanying turmoil that Greece has experienced in recent years.

Now, as the United States, we can probably hang on a little longer than most other countries before entering a full-blown debt crisis. It is helpful that our economy was surging before being waylaid by the onset of the coronavirus, but even we can't hang on forever. Sooner or later, if we don't address the size of our soaring debt, we are going to have a problem—a lot of problems, in fact.

That is not something most of my colleagues across the aisle want to hear. They would like to spend as much as they want, whenever they want, on whatever new government program that they have come up with, and they imply that Republicans are miserly for not wanting to join them.

Republicans, Democrats imply or sometimes say, just don't care about the ordinary Americans who would supposedly benefit from Democrats' spending. In fact, the opposite is true. In the face of the pandemic, Republicans have been willing to spend huge sums to help our fellow Americans weather this crisis, and Republicans are worried about our spending and our debt precisely because we care deeply about ordinary Americans. We know what the consequences of unchecked debt and spending can be, and we want to protect Americans from those consequences.

To start with, the larger our debt grows, the more interest we are likely to have to pay—and we are already paying a lot. Right now, we are paying roughly \$484 billion a year in interest on our debt. That is a substantial chunk of our yearly budget, and that is money that could otherwise be going to other priorities.

And the problem has only snowballed. By 2029, the yearly interest on our debt is projected to reach \$807 bil-

lion, according to one estimate. Now, that is going to eat up a lot—a lot—of money that could otherwise be spent on important investments: healthcare, veterans, infrastructure, defense, seniors, education. We would have a lot more money to devote to those priorities if we weren't paying hundreds of billions in interest each year on our debt.

Then there are the economic consequences of a huge debt: The economy will struggle. Unemployment will grow. Businesses will create fewer jobs, if they create jobs at all. Wages and benefits will likely stagnate. The stock market will struggle.

We have had to borrow a lot of money this year to meet the coronavirus crisis, and there is no doubt it is money we needed to borrow. That happens sometimes during a crisis. But we need to be very aware of the fact that we have driven up our deficit by \$3.3 trillion just this fiscal year, further increasing our Nation's debt, and we need to be very careful about any additional borrowing and ensure we are borrowing only what is absolutely necessary.

Republicans have caught a lot of flak from Democrats for not being willing to use the coronavirus as an excuse for unchecked government spending, including for noncoronavirus-related measures, but we have made a priority of scrutinizing additional spending because we don't want to get our country out of one economic crisis only to plunge it into another. Unfortunately, that is a lesson that is lost on many of my Democratic colleagues.

We think the debt is bad now, and it is, but it is nothing like what our debt will look like if Democrats take Congress and the White House in November and start putting some of their bigger spending plans into effect—plans like Medicare for All, which would cost, as a conservative estimate, \$32 trillion over 10 years; or the Green New Deal, Democrats' \$93 trillion boondoggle.

That is right, Madam President; you didn't mishear that. The Green New Deal is estimated to cost over \$93 trillion over 10 years. To put that in perspective, the size of the entire Federal budget in 2019 was \$4.4 trillion, or substantially less than the cost of 1 year of the Green New Deal.

Now, you might think a pie-in-the-sky fantasy like the Green New Deal would have been abandoned by Democrats by now, but you would be wrong. More than a year after its introduction, it is apparently still going strong.

Yesterday, I spoke on the floor about Democrats' threat to eliminate the legislative filibuster in the Senate, and that is the Senate rule that helps ensure that bills that come before the Senate require bipartisan cooperation.

Shortly before I spoke, the Senator from Massachusetts, who introduced the Green New Deal resolution in the Senate, appeared on National Public Radio, where he was asked whether he thought there were any parts of the

Green New Deal that could attract bipartisan support. The Senator's response: The whole thing needs to be enacted—and if Republicans don't allow that to happen, Democrats should change the Senate rules to eliminate the legislative filibuster.

Apparently, Democrats aren't willing to even moderate their proposal. If the Senator from Massachusetts has his way, Democrats will shove the entire \$93 trillion down the throats of the American people. I guess the American people will just have to survive the resulting debt crisis.

When you ask about the pricetag for Democrats' socialist fantasies, Democrats will make noise about somehow paying for it. We will tax the rich, they say. The rich, they say, aren't paying their fair share. The problem, of course, is that increasing taxes on the rich isn't going to pay for these proposals.

You could tax not only the rich but a good portion of middle class at rates nearly 100 percent and not come up anywhere close to getting \$93 trillion that would be necessary to pay for the Green New Deal.

There is, in fact, no way to pay for these proposals. They will be financed by enormous additions to our national debt, and ordinary Americans will suffer the consequences: a shrinking economy, fewer jobs, lost jobs, lower wages, lack of opportunity, and much more.

I hope we will take action on our debt before it is too late. One thing we have to consider is how to shore up and protect Social Security and Medicare, which are currently the main drivers of our national debt. Thanks to an aging Baby Boomer population, these programs are under a great deal of strain.

My colleague from Utah, Senator ROMNEY, recently introduced legislation, called the TRUST Act, to begin to address these endangered trust funds and to start to rein in our national debt. Bipartisan legislation like this would be a good start to preventing our country from facing an economic crisis in the coming decades.

The Republican Senators sponsoring the legislation were joined by a handful of Democrats, which gives me hope that perhaps not all of my Democratic colleagues are determined to explode our national debt with their socialist fantasies.

Unfortunately, too many Democrats—including the Democrats' Vice Presidential candidate—are open to bankrupting Americans with the Green New Deal and other plans. I hope they will not have the chance to implement their legislation because our economy and the American people might never recover from the consequences.

I yield floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, it is pretty obvious that my Republican colleagues think that the Presiding Officer is going to lose her race and a number of incumbent Senators are going to

lose their races and because it looks like there is going to be a Democratic President and a Democratic Senate and Democratic House, all of a sudden my far-right colleagues are concerned about the national deficit and the national debt.

In President Trump's second year in office, Congress passed a bill that provided about \$1.5 trillion in tax cuts. Between 70 and 80 percent of the tax cuts went to the richest 1 percent of the people in this country. It pushed the national debt into a whole new stratosphere. It took money we were going to use to build infrastructure—highways, bridges, water and sewer systems—and just ignored that plan. And now all of a sudden my colleagues are interested in the national debt—not when the Republicans are in control; they want to give more and more and more tax cuts. But when Democrats are in control, Democrats want to invest in infrastructure; Democrats want to save this economy right now, including providing \$600 a week for unemployed workers—680,000 of them in my State, close to 400,000 of them in the Presiding Officer's State—Democrats want to invest in infrastructure and job training and protecting Medicare and Social Security. But now that Republicans think they are going to lose, it is all about the national debt and doing nothing to help workers right now.

I want to talk today specifically about workers and how this President and all the President's enablers—and they are enablers. My Republican colleagues don't even speak up when the President so dishonors our fallen soldiers. They don't speak up when the President has clearly lied, his own words, about the coronavirus—lied to the American people after he was taped, in his own words, by a former reporter and absolutely failed to speak up about workers.

Every day we live with the horrific consequences of leadership failures in this country. So many Americans have lost jobs; they have lost small businesses; they have lost their sense of security; and they have lost much of their faith in their own government; and in nearly 200,000 American families, they have lost a loved one. All because President Trump and his enablers here—all because President Trump has failed to get this pandemic under control, he has failed to protect American workers.

A few weeks ago, I was talking to a woman in Cincinnati. I was actually home; it was a remote call. She is a grocery store worker. She said: You know, they call me essential, but I don't feel essential. I feel expendable because they pay me so little, and they do so little to keep me safe at work.

President Trump's administration, get this, has gotten 8,000—8,000, 8-0-0-0—complaints about unsafe workplaces since the start of this pandemic. We know how many busdrivers have died. We know how many grocery store workers have died. We know how many

meatpacking plant workers have died. We know how many hospital workers have died—not just nurses and doctors, and we grieve for them and their families and applaud and are so grateful for their service—but it is orderlies who have died also, and the people who change the bed sheets and change the linens in the hospitals have died.

The President has gotten 8,000 complaints about unsafe workplaces. This summer, we had President Trump's corporate lawyer, Secretary of Labor Scalia, before the Finance Committee. When I say "corporate lawyer," I mean corporate lawyer. He represents the President in the Department of Labor. As a corporate lawyer, when there is a fork in the road, do I support workers or do I support corporate interests? Every single time he goes with corporate interests.

It is not a surprise because the Secretary of Labor used to be a corporate lawyer who made millions and millions of dollars representing corporations against workers. That is the kind of person the President picked—if that doesn't tell you a whole lot about President Trump's betrayal of workers.

He appointed the Secretary of Labor, somebody who always has represented corporations, making millions of dollars against workers. So what is he going to do as Secretary of Labor? He is going to do what the President wants him to do. He is going to support corporate interests against workers.

I asked Secretary Scalia in the Finance Committee, out of the thousands of workers who have come to you for help, how many in-person inspections have you done? Thousands of workers have come to him for help. How many inspections of workplaces have they done? Zero—zero in Atlanta; zero in Savannah; zero in Griffin, GA; zero in Covington, GA; zero in Mansfield, GA; zero in Stone Mountain, GA; zero in Ohio.

I don't know the Presiding Officer very well, but she took an oath to represent her State, as I took an oath to represent my State. And one of the things we do is fight—should fight for everyday people, for workers.

This Secretary of Labor had done zero—zero inspections after 6 months of Americans reporting to work in a pandemic, and there were over 8,000 complaints—8,000 complaints from workers saying that my workplace is not safe.

There is a pandemic. Zero inspections. Do you know what? Not one Republican member of the Finance Committee—not one Republican Senator on the Finance Committee—spoke up and pushed Secretary Scalia to do inspections or to look out for workers. Why? Because it would have made the President of the United States unhappy if a Republican Senator had questioned what the President of the United States does.

They don't question him when he insults our soldiers who have died. They don't question him when he lies to the

American public about the pandemic. They don't question him when he fails his leadership role to protect workers.

Zero inspections—6 months, 8,000 complaints. Zero inspections to make sure corporations are giving workers the protective equipment and the other safety protocols they need.

I demanded that Secretary Scalia, at this hearing, follow up and tell us about any inspections they conducted and what the results of those inspections were. He said he couldn't get that information. He is the Secretary of Labor; I am not.

Guess how many fines they have issued. Five—five fines. As far as we know, President Trump's administration has only issued 5 fines out of more than 8,000 workers complaining that their employers are failing to protect them.

Last week—a notable week for the Trump administration—they did something about workers, but listen to what they did. They fined Smithfield. Smithfield is a multibillion-dollar company owned by the Chinese Communist Party. They fined Smithfield \$13,000, after 1,300 workers got sick at just 1 plant in South Dakota, and 4 people died.

Let's do the math: \$13,000 fine, 1,300 workers got sick. That is \$10 a worker. They fined this multibillion-dollar company, owned by the Chinese Communist Party in the United States, in South Dakota—they fined this company \$10 per infected worker, a multibillion-dollar corporation.

The idea that \$10 a worker will stop these guys from continuing to abuse their workers is absurd. Do you know what? Every other corporate leader around the country heard: Oh, my gosh. President Trump is on our side. He is on our side every single time. President Trump is on our side when it comes to a complaint from a worker, so we don't have to worry about making our workers safe because we know the President of the United States might fine us \$10 per every sick worker.

One-third of the workers at this plant got sick—one-third of the workers. They were not putting all the money they make—the billions of dollars that they pull out of South Dakota, this company, and send those dollars, probably electronically, I guess not by boat, to the Communist Party in China. All those dollars they take out of that plant, and they can't put any of those dollars to invest in protecting workers to make their companies successful.

President Trump could crack down on these corporations. He is not going to do that. He comes from corporate America. He inherited billions of dollars. He has had a lot of personal bankruptcies. Forget about that. He is on their side. Politics, government—it is about whose side you are on. Are you on the President's side every single time, no matter what he does? Are you on corporations' side every single time, no matter what they do? No matter

how many workers get sick, no matter how many workers they kill, it is on their watch—no matter how many workers they kill, you are going to be on the corporation's side every single time? And the answer in Trump's America is yes.

Instead, he could mobilize workers. He could mobilize American manufacturers to get every American worker the masks and protective equipment they need. He could issue an OSHA temporary standard that would provide clear, enforceable requirements for keeping workers safe.

He could stand up for workers. He campaigned on it. He could actually stand up for workers. But he will not. It is always the same story with this corporate President, always the same story. He wants to protect the big guys—workers' health and workers' safety be damned.

He campaigned in 2016, in my State—he surprised people how much he won by in my State. He campaigned by promising he would look out for workers. He went all over Ohio; he went all over the industrial Midwest—the Great Lake States areas—telling workers he would take care of them and would fight for them.

Now we know how much these workers' health and how much these workers' lives mean to this President—about \$10 each. He has betrayed these workers over and over. His corporate tax cuts—Senator THUNE was talking about Democrats and taxes and the deficit in an easy-to-understand way. He betrayed these workers over and over. Corporate tax cuts: 70 percent of the benefits went to the richest 1 percent. He took away 100,000 Ohio workers' overtime pay. He took away overtime pay from workers in Savannah, in LaGrange, in Newton County, and Jasper County, GA. He took overtime pay away from my constituents in Cleveland and Mansfield and Shelby and Chillicothe.

He stacks the courts with corporate lawyers. Those lawyers—now judges—will always decide for corporate interests against workers' interests.

He launched a boycott against Good-year, a unionized tire-making plant headquartered in Akron—one of the greatest companies in our State and one of the most renowned, iconic companies—because somebody made a statement about one of his "Make America Great" hats. He launched a boycott costing who knows how many jobs in that company.

He has betrayed workers by his failure to fight for autoworkers and their jobs. He promised workers in Lordstown, OH: Don't sell your homes. This plant may close, but don't sell your homes. We are going to bring back these jobs.

Then he did nothing when we asked him to help, and they shut down, costing 3,000 jobs.

Most recently, he and Senator MCCONNELL and all their minions who follow Senator MCCONNELL's lead took

away \$600 a week in unemployment benefits. What are those workers to do? What are those workers to do in Georgia? What are those workers to do in Ohio? What are those workers to do in Illinois and Delaware when their \$600 a week just disappears?

I know there are a lot of wealthy people on both sides of the aisle. There are a lot of very wealthy people here. There are millionaire Members of the Senate. When I hear millionaire Senators and billionaire people in the administration say that \$600 a week is just too much money—we can't give these unemployed workers that much money. That \$600 a week is too much money. They are going to get lazy. They are not going to work.

When I hear millionaire Members of the Senate say such things, it sickens me. That \$600 a week is the reason that millions of Americans didn't fall into poverty during this terrible, terrible recession. But lo and behold, the administration is happy and the Republican Senators are happy because the stock market has recovered. I know a lot of you in this institution have a lot of money in the stock market. I won't even get into the conflicts of interest when you own this stock and you vote this away. Forget about that. You have a lot of money in the stock market, so I know you are really happy. I know the Presiding Officer and Republican Members of the Senate are really happy that the stock market recovered in the spring. So then Donald Trump doesn't even have to pretend to care about getting this pandemic under control.

Corporations are doing fine. Never mind the workers who are getting sick. Never mind the essential workers. The essential workers are the busdrivers, food service people, custodians, security people, people who work in grocery stores and drug stores.

The essential workers—who are mostly women, disproportionately people of color, who mostly are barely adequately paid—the essential workers face something most of us don't: They work all day exposed to the public. They wear masks. They are safe—most of them. They do things safely. They work all day, and then they go home always anxious.

Madam President, imagine feeling every day when you go home that you might have contracted coronavirus and you might pass it on to your family. Imagine the anxiety these generally low-paid workers face every day when they go home. We don't think about them around here because corporations are doing fine and the stock market has recovered. The workers go home every night worried they will affect their families. Most of them won't; they will get along just fine.

American workers are tired of this. They are sick of this. They are tired of the empty promises. They are tired of the betrayals. They are tired of feeling like no one in this government, in this Senate, in this White House is on their side.

If all of you would—could actually lead when the President doesn't, we could pass a bill issuing an OSHA—Occupational Safety and Health Administration—temporary standard, protecting people. We could issue a temporary standard to protect people on the job. We could pass pandemic pay. That is what the House of Representatives down the hall did.

When the House of Representatives passed their bill and they took that bill down the hall and put it in Senator MCCONNELL's office there, I guess that bill got lost. One of the things that bill did have was pandemic premium pay. If you are one of those workers—I know this amount of money doesn't mean much to the Presiding Officer or most of my Senate colleagues, but they would get up to \$10,000 pandemic pay because they expose themselves in the workplaces—essential workers—to this illness. It would actually pay these essential workers for putting their health and their lives on the line to serve us.

It is time for us to step up. If you love this country, it is time we fought for the people who make it work. It is time we fought for the people who make this country work. Instead of always siding with U.S. corporations and with the wealthiest people in this society, it is time we decide in this body to actually fight for workers.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I rise today in support of four highly-qualified California nominees to the U.S. District Court: John Holcomb, Mark Scarsi, and Judge Stanley Blumenfeld to the Central District of California, and Todd Robinson to the Southern District of California. (These four nominees know the districts where they will serve if confirmed, and I believe they have demonstrated in their legal careers the skills needed to serve as fair and impartial judges. All four of these nominees received Well Qualified ratings from the American Bar Association, and all have significant legal experience in California.)

John Holcomb, who has been nominated to the Central District of California, is currently a partner at the law firm Greenberg Gross. Mr. Holcomb has spent more than 25 years in private practice, focusing on intellectual property issues. He also served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Navy. I understand that if confirmed, Mr. Holcomb will be sitting in the Riverside Courthouse, which is badly in need of judges.

Mark Scarsi, nominated to the Central District of California, is currently managing partner of the Los Angeles office of the law firm Milbank, Tweed. Mr. Scarsi joined that firm in 2007 after spending more than a decade with other California-based law firms, including O'Melveny & Myers and Christie, Parker, & Hale. Mr. Scarsi specializes in patent cases, with a focus on intellectual property. He has tried some 28 cases to verdict, judgment, or