

Unemployment doesn't cover the cost of a full salary. Each worker would have less to spend on gas and groceries, on a mortgage, and on medicine. In the downturn of the economy that we have been facing, we can't afford more loss.

Our economy is showing some signs of modest recovery as the result of the economic stimulus from the CARES Act, but many of those benefits are expiring. I can tell you, as a Member from the Pacific Northwest, I hear a lot from businesses that didn't get help and support in the PPP program and want it to continue so that they, too, can be on par with some of their friends and neighbors who have been able to succeed economically.

Right now, we are at a turning point at which we need the PSP program to continue and to help give certainty about transportation. Nationally, on average, we know an aviation mechanic takes home about \$1,600 per week in pay, but when these jobs are cut, the weekly incomes are cut. Let's look at a few States and a few examples.

Right now, in North Carolina, the weekly income for a mechanic is only \$350 a week in unemployment benefits, and that worker is facing a 79-percent cut in weekly income. So I ask our colleagues to consider, as you think about shifting these transportation workers from these salaries that they are getting now to unemployment benefits, how dramatic these cuts will be in some of these States.

I am proud that I come from a State in which we have a pretty robust unemployment benefit. I thank our State and the people who vote for and support a robust unemployment benefit, but if we continue to not act on the CARES Act and the PPP, we will be sending people home to States with unemployment benefits that will be much less robust than in my State. Right now, to face a 79-percent cut in one's weekly income I don't think is good for the aviation sector.

On average, when you look at the weekly income for ramp agents in Georgia, it is about \$850, but now that any additional weekly benefits have run out, these workers face a 57-percent income cut. In State after State, we see these cuts in these weekly incomes. This means, as I said, less money to spend on groceries and less money to spend on essentials at home. Without any additional weekly benefits, in Florida, pilots will see a 92-percent drop in income, flight attendants a 75-percent drop, mechanics an 83-percent drop, and ramp agents a 68-percent drop. In Texas, pilots will see an 85-percent drop in weekly income, flight attendants a 52-percent drop, mechanics a 68-percent drop, and ramp agents a 48-percent drop.

My point here is to think about the need for us to continue this program in that not all States are going to be treated equally in how aviation workers will be affected. We have to think about how we are going to keep that

important air travel moving for our economy.

Without the extension, flight crews, flight attendants, and others will be impacted in another way, in that, when you stop air transportation services, people, after a period of time, will have to come back and be retrained and recertified. Many times here, I have participated in debates about tax credits or tax policy. Oftentimes, we go past our deadline of December 31 and into the new year. Even though we can't reach a conclusion, most people think: Well, that is OK. We will make it retroactive, so going past our deadline doesn't impact anything. In this case, it does impact something because, once we hit the October 1 deadline and we start seeing these people in unemployment situations, the time starts ticking for the cost of recertifying them to be in that cockpit or to be of service.

For example, pilots have to meet certain flying requirements to maintain currency in their pilot licenses. So, without an extension of the PSP, flight crews and flight attendants would need to be retrained at the cost of starting up again. A PSP extension also means supporting their wages and making sure that they have available healthcare during this time period.

I don't want to see one more American lose one's healthcare benefits because of COVID. We are in a COVID crisis. We want people to be covered with healthcare so that we can help to fight this pandemic. I know people here in Congress are looking at the very short time period that we have left before September 30. I call on my colleagues to set aside our differences and come back to the table and make sure that we address these issues before this major layoff.

This is important because, as I said, this affects the GDP of our country. We still have an opportunity to sustain 950,000 frontline aviation workers, which is important to helping our economy recover. As I said, it is important because aviation helps to grow opportunities for the future.

My colleague Senator SCOTT and I will tomorrow be announcing other aviation legislation that we, too, think will help the aviation sector. For every 10 percent of travel that returns to aviation, it drives more than \$1.5 billion into our economy. Those are salaries and wages and other aspects of this sector. That is the economic impact that we will have by returning flight service.

The original premise around the COVID bill was for us not to decimate the airline industry so much, because of the COVID impact, that it wouldn't recover and so that we wouldn't be there to retrain and take advantage of the upside as the public responds. We have now gone from that 95-percent loss of travel to, right before the Labor Day weekend, about 40 percent of airline capacity and travel. We want to continue being ready to serve the public who has to fly, and we want to

make sure it is safe for the public to fly. Getting this extension of the COVID bill done before September 30 still remains a key priority.

On the point of aviation, I would say to my colleagues, besides the Cantwell-Scott bill we will be dropping tomorrow to help focus on more aviation safety, my colleague Senator WICKER and I remain committed to continuing to work on aviation safety as it relates to certification legislation. I hope all of our colleagues on the Commerce Committee will continue to focus on that as well.

WILDFIRES

Madam President, I would now like to say a few words about another pressing issue in the State of Washington, and that is the issue of fire.

Yesterday, we heard from the Deputy Forest Chief that we needed 5,000 firefighters in the United States to help fight fires. It is clear that we don't have 5,000 firefighters helping as COVID has impacted our ability to fight fire. So I call on the President to help us reach out to the international community to help us get more firefighters into the United States.

While Washington and Oregon may eventually see wetter weather in October, we still have massive fires that we are going to see in California in the month of October. We need to get more firefighters into the United States to help us fight this incredible attack by Mother Nature on our communities. We can't leave them defenseless. We need to give them a frontline in the defense, so I call on the President to help us get more international support for fighting fires in the United States of America.

Additionally, I will be supporting my colleague Senator WYDEN's efforts today on prescribed burns and the ability to change our policies and do prescribed burns at different times of the year, which is to say burn some of the fuel that we think could become fire breaks and stop fires from becoming larger and larger. The fuel break helps to create a line of defense. We supported this legislation several years ago. Unfortunately, it didn't make it into the big fire fix bill when we stopped fire borrowing. Nonetheless, it remains a big priority.

What we have come to learn now is that trying to do prescribed burns in the summer months, when you have clearer air, doesn't really help—it is not helping us because we have such large-scale fires and these very unhealthy smoke events that last for days and days. Now, thanks to the new fire forecasting models that we have and the new fire forecasters that we put in the previous bill, we are now seeing how unhealthy those conditions really are. They are so unhealthy that they are cause of major concern for health officials across the whole West.

So what do we need to do now?

We need to pass this proposal that I support, along with my colleague Senator WYDEN, to move prescribed burns

to other parts of the year. Yes, will it create a few smoky days here or there during parts of our year? Yes, but it will help us to better fight these fires when it comes to these very hot, dry climates that we are now seeing with greater frequency in the Pacific Northwest and throughout the West.

It is time for us to take dramatic action in responding to these fires. We have taken action, but now we need to use these tools that are right in front of us today. Get more firefighters and get the prescribed burn policies and move forward with protecting some of our most vulnerable communities throughout the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1135

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I am going to be talking about a bill of mine that is, I think, very appropriate and very timely, the Protect Our Heroes Act, which will federalize certain violent crimes against public safety officers across the country, like the police and first responders, in order to deter these kinds of crimes and show the men and women in our law enforcement community that we have their backs.

Before I get into the details of my bill, I want to talk a little bit about a very moving event.

I was back home last week in Alaska. I was at the American Legion Post No. 15 in Palmer, AK, and it was on the commemoration of September 11. It was a wonderful remembrance dinner. There were tons of veterans, patriots. My State is blessed with more vets per capita than any State in the country.

But it was focused on law enforcement. We had the Palmer police chief there. We had members of the police department from Anchorage there because we were focused on so many things that came out of that day—9/11.

But honoring our first responders is something that I think America learned—that we need to respect the men and women epitomized by the police and firemen who went up the Tower. Many of them knew they were going to die, and they did that. They did that to protect us, and there was this newfound respect for our first responders that came out of the tragedy of 9/11.

Now, in my remarks to my fellow veterans in Palmer at the American Legion post last Friday, I did mention that one of the elements of what is happening in our country, unfortunately, is that these memories are fading. They are fading, and in some ways the respect for the police is not just fading. It is being reversed.

You see these movements, these national movements of defunding our police—a horrible idea, in my view. My State needs more law enforcement, not less. We have seen on our TV screens and our social media channels that there are people—criminals—who are

focused on harming the police, killing the police, attacking the police, and even taking glee in the killing and the violence against law enforcement.

So we have all seen in the past few years a dramatic increase in killings, in ambushes. In Iowa, New York, Massachusetts, Texas, California, Colorado, Pennsylvania, and Georgia this has been happening. It certainly hit home in my State.

In Anchorage, in 2016, we had a brave police officer, Arn Salao, who was the victim of a cowardly ambush in 2016. Thankfully, he survived, barely. What was the result of the arrest of the individual who tried to kill him? He ended up being a serial killer, killing five others in Anchorage. But this brave police officer found him, stopped him, and almost lost his life.

Unfortunately, another officer in a shooting in Alaska the same year, 2016, in Fairbanks, wasn't so fortunate. On October 16, 2016, Sergeant Allen Brandt, an 11-year veteran of the Fairbanks Police Department, pulled over a suspect to question him, and he was shot five times. He eventually succumbed to the complications related to his injuries.

I went to the memorial service. There were hundreds of Alaskans. He had a young family, a young wife. It was brutal to watch this.

These are selfless men and women in my State, who are every day getting up to risk their lives and to wear the uniform in the line of duty.

All of this inspired me to put together my Protect Our Heroes Act, which will enhance Federal penalties for the killing or assaulting of public safety officers and first responders, especially increasing penalties for criminals who ambush or lure law enforcement officers for the purpose of committing crimes against them—dramatically enhancing penalties.

This is something that I think the vast majority of us in the Senate agree with.

Now, I take the opportunity to go running most days, whether I am here or back home. And when I go running on Capitol Hill, what I see every morning—and I saw it this morning—are police officers. No matter the time of day, Capitol Police are sitting in their vehicles or on patrol. Their sole purpose is to protect this institution and the Members.

This morning, as I usually do when I run past them sitting in their car, I just gave them a thumbs-up. Thank you. Thank you. We respect you, and we certainly have your back.

So that is why I am offering this legislation today. I hope my Senate colleagues can come together to support this. I think it would be inconceivable to vote against this bill, especially now when we are seeing these kinds of heinous activities like we saw in Compton, CA. But we also want to send a message to our first responders and law enforcement: We are watching. We are going to pass laws to disincentivize

this kind of heinous action against you, and we have your back and the back of your family members, who are probably worried when you go out on your duty every day.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 1135 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, that the Sullivan substitute amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Is there objection?

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, thank you for the recognition.

Mr. President, I reserve my right to object.

As a former assistant U.S. attorney and New Mexico attorney general, I worked hard to prosecute violent crimes, including those committed against law enforcement.

The recent shootings of two law enforcement officers in California were heinous. My deepest condolences and prayers go out to the officers and their families. The perpetrator must be brought to justice. All such violence is appalling.

However, this bill is both unnecessary and, potentially, a problematic expansion of Federal criminal law. It is already a Federal crime to kill or attempt to kill an officer or employee of the United States.

Most, if not all, States already make killing a police officer a specific crime, and, of course, murder and assault are crimes in all 50 States and Territories.

So it is unclear that this bill will increase deterrence, and the bill is very broad, covering not only murder and attempted murder but also any assault against hundreds of thousands or perhaps millions of people.

One new crime created by the bill is death eligible, raising historic concerns about executing the innocent and the death penalty being arbitrarily applied.

This bill has not gone through the regular order, with no hearings on such a sweeping change in the balance of State and Federal criminal law.

For many years, the Heritage Foundation, the Hoover Institution, the Federalist Society, and congressional Republicans have all spoken out against the expansion of Federal criminal law. It is not just conservatives. There is bipartisan support for that view and broad consensus among criminal law experts and the Federal judiciary itself.

The Judicial Conference of the U.S. courts has testified to Congress against the over-criminalization of Federal law, citing the burdens they already face.