

could, as we saw the efforts by some foreign actors and some people in their basements trying to see if they could get into the voter registration system and do something with it. We have done more of that—well, we have done all we can think of, in my view. We did a lot of it before 2018, and that never stopped.

For 20 years, Congress has done all we can think of to help make the system work better. We have spent over \$1 billion in the past 4 years. We have encouraged them to update, and we have seen updates of antiquated systems. Systems that didn't have a ballot trail and other things have all been generally replaced, and where they haven't been, I think they are on even higher alert. We have helped them increase their cyber security. We have responded to COVID-19 with help to local governments, which in some cases was used for establishing polling places and even maybe paying extra to election judges.

While we provided those resources, it has been for a long time and still is up to local and State officials, who are the closest to the people they work for, to do everything they can to secure those elections. I spent about 20 years doing that, part of it as a local election official in Missouri, a county official, and part of it as the Missouri secretary of state, the chief election official.

Earlier this month, I had a chance to be in Kansas City when the county clerks and election authorities were all meeting. Most of them were there at a distanced meeting to talk about election responsibility. Others were virtually there to talk again about the absolute commitment they have made to the people they work for to conduct elections in a way that is both free and fair. I think that is what is going to happen.

Clearly, again, there are efforts by foreign adversaries—Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and others—to interfere with our elections, but we want to be sure and I believe have been sure that Federal agencies have been providing the resources they needed to investigate bad actors, to punish bad actors, and to do everything they could to protect the American election system.

We are in a much different place than we were 4 years ago. Election authorities—State and, in many cases, local—know the name of the person at Homeland Security with whom they have had now a 4-year relationship or a 2-year relationship or a 1-year relationship, and when they get a call the day before the election, they are going to know that is a call from somebody who not only is there to help them that day but has been there to help them up until now.

The Rules Committee has held four hearings since the 2018 election—one on election security, one on how we are preparing for the 2020 election, one on oversight of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, and in addition to

that, putting people on the Federal Election Commission to fill vacancies that had been there for a long time.

The Judiciary Committee has looked into things like the social media companies that are trying to stop disinformation.

Homeland Security has drawn out a roadmap and has put the kinds of protections into the system that you want to have in the system for equipment that counts votes, the registration system that is available on election day.

The Intelligence Committee, as I said before, conducted a 3½-year investigation on foreign meddling in the last election, and the administration is holding those perpetrators accountable.

The Justice Department has secured indictments against three Russian companies. Twenty-six people involved with Russia's influence campaign in 2016 have been impacted by that. The Justice Department has sanctioned 46 other people and 18 businesses.

One of the things we didn't have in 2016 was a cyber offense. We had a cyber defense and I think the best in the world at that moment—I hope it still is—but we didn't have a cyber offense.

I remember being in an Intel hearing in 2017—this was early 2017—when the question was put to our intel community: Have you ever been told by the President of the United States that you should have offensive action taken against these bad actors? The answer by all of them was no. But it was March or April of 2017. The President of the United States who hadn't given that direction for the previous years was not the current President, who, not too long after that, did give that direction.

By 2018, when we sought cyber offense, we had our own cyber offense. They know who they are, and they know the price they paid and the price they would pay again. Thousands of members of the intelligence community have been working to keep an eye on that part of keeping our elections secure.

Providing Federal support to State and local officials is the right approach. Frankly, I have been in favor of providing a little more yet this year, but that appears to be part of a bill that we just can't seem to agree to even though somewhere between the targeted Senate bill and the Problem Solvers' bipartisan bill in the House that was released a week or so ago, there is clearly a settlement there that would likely include a little more election security assistance. But we are getting pretty late to add much to the system; we need to now be sure that what is in the system really works. We don't need a Federal takeover.

Many of you heard me say before that late in 2016, President Obama said: "There is no serious person out there who would suggest somehow that you could even rig America's elections, in part because they're so decentralized in

the numbers of votes involved." I think he is exactly right. The diversity of the system is the strength of the system.

I personally think the best place to vote is at a polling place on election day. I don't always get to vote that way. But if you want to have all the information that happens between the start of the campaign and the day you vote, the only way you get that is voting on election day. If you want to see your ballot go into a ballot box or into the counting system and know that happened, you better get that on election day.

But many people will vote in other ways, particularly this year. Usually, the other ways are a little more complicated, but they are still protected by comparison of signatures in most States. Usually, there is still going to be included an indication on the voter roll that goes to the polling place that somebody has already received another ballot. There are safeguards there.

For reasons we all understand, more people are going to vote earlier in this election than ever before. I know our election officials in our State and I suspect all over the country are planning for what they can do to still have the most information available possible on election night, but it is unlikely that we are going to know everything we want to know on election night.

If you don't want to vote at a polling place on election day or can't vote at a polling place on election day, you should still vote. Confidence in everything you hear or read should not be complete, but I think confidence that the election system itself is going to tabulate the results that came in and the votes that were cast is a pretty safe bet.

Politics can become heated and noisy during an election season, but at the end of the day, the American people need to understand that we are doing all we can to give them the ability to cast their ballots with minimal obstacles and maximum confidence that what happens on election day is what the voters voted to do on election day.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 20 minutes.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, this is a "Time to Wake Up" good news-bad news speech.

The good news from last week is on business community support for carbon pricing. What is carbon pricing? Well, remember that IMF—the International Monetary Fund—pegs the fossil fuel subsidy in the United States at more than \$600 billion per year, so the energy market is dramatically tilted to favor fossil fuels. Carbon pricing helps

set that right, helps make an even playing field. It is economics 101. And carbon pricing makes a lot of sense.

What happened last week? The Business Roundtable, made up of all of these giant American corporations and more—these are the top 50 that I could fit on this chart, but there are 200 of them—came out in support of carbon pricing. Their report warned that the consequences of climate change for global prosperity and socioeconomic well-being are significant. The world simply cannot afford the costs of inaction.

The Business Roundtable's report went on to urge companies to "align policy goals and [greenhouse gas] emissions reduction targets with scientific evidence." Listen to the scientists. We could do more of that.

The BRT said that a key component of science-based climate policy should be a price on carbon. Here is what they said:

A price on carbon would provide an effective incentive to reduce [greenhouse gas] emissions and mitigate climate change, including through the development and deployment of breakthrough technologies. . . . Establishing a clear price signal is the most important—

The most important—consideration for encouraging innovation, driving efficiency, and ensuring sustained environmental and economic effectiveness.

So this is big news—these are big companies—and this is good news. These companies at the Business Roundtable employ more than 15 million people. They have more than \$7.5 trillion in revenues. Their unified voice is a good thing and a big deal.

With all of that good news from all of these big American corporations, what is the bad news? The bad news is that corporate America often shows one face to the world and a very different face to Congress, and the face they show to Congress is not at all aligned with this policy they just announced to the world. This discrepancy, this misalignment, is a persistent problem, and it needs to be fixed.

The problem has three dimensions. One, even these companies don't pay much attention to climate change in their lobbying and election activities. For most, it is zero attention.

By the way, that silence is deafening around here, and that silence by these companies is compounded by the trade associations through which they consolidate their lobbying work. Most trade associations do nothing on climate.

Here is Coke and Pepsi's trade association. By the way, here are Pepsi and Coke on the list of companies that joined the Business Roundtable pro-climate, pro-carbon-price statement. But when they lobby, here is their American Beverage Association, the trade association. As you can see, they haven't been spending much money lately, and they haven't been spending anything on climate.

In 2009 and in 2010, they spent a lot of money. Why? Because we were starting

to work on ObamaCare and there was an idea that the companies that sold sugary beverages that created health issues should help pay the cost of the health issues that their sweetened beverages created. So off to battle went the American Beverage Association with millions and millions of dollars in spending.

This, by the way, is just the number of lobbyists. This is their spending. So if they cared about climate change and wanted to put a little bit of lobby pressure on, this is what they are capable of doing. This is what they are doing.

Here is a pitch, in my hands right here, entitled "TechNet: Remaining Legislative Priorities for 2020." This is 13 pages of advocacy for all the things the tech sector wants from Congress through their trade association, TechNet—13 pages. The list goes on and on. "Top priorities," and then page after page, in small print, of all the priorities, of all the things that they want Congress to do for them—and there is not a single mention of climate change, not a single mention of carbon price.

What do you think Congress will respond to—general noise made to the world or your specific asks to Congress?

Here is the list of companies whose CEOs signed that Business Roundtable report and came out for action on climate and a carbon price and who are also in TechNet, which, the week before, came here with 13 pages of legislative priorities that didn't include either climate change or carbon price.

You have to line things up, you guys. These are big players. Look at them: Honeywell, Amazon, Microsoft, Cisco, Dell, Visa, GM, Apple, Comcast, Oracle, Accenture, Hewlett-Packard, and PayPal—all on both sides of the issue within the same week here in Congress. So those are the trade associations that do nothing on this issue.

It gets worse because there are trade associations that are our worst enemies on climate action. In fact, InfluenceMap has done some research and tracked which groups and which corporations are the most climate friendly and which are the most climate hostile. If you look all the way over, right next to Marathon Petroleum in hostility is the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. There was actually a tie. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers were statistically tied as the two worst climate obstructers in America.

So they are out here, having worked hammer and tongs to stop climate legislation and prevent a carbon price, and you have the Business Roundtable statement supporting action on climate change and supporting a carbon price.

So here are the companies that are members of the Business Roundtable and came out last week for action on climate change and supported a carbon price and that are also members of the

U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which relentlessly opposes all serious climate action and, specifically, a carbon price.

Look at them all. Look at them all. I don't know if the camera can pan in on that, but these are some of America's biggest corporations. I would bet you that, if this group said, "Hey, we have just made a new decision over in the Business Roundtable, wearing our Business Roundtable hat," and went to the Chamber and said, "We are not going to do your opposition any longer; we are not going to support your opposition to climate action; we are actually serious about being for climate action and a carbon price"—if all of those companies actually said that to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and threatened to quit if they didn't clean up their act at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, that would make a very big difference.

And around here that would make a very big difference because the Chamber is the biggest kahuna of lobbying. It is electioneering all the time, usually against Democrats, almost inevitably for the worst candidate on climate, and they are over in courts and in regulatory agencies opposing climate action all the time. So why support that if what you really support is doing something on climate, including a carbon price?

So the National Association of Manufacturers was the other group in a tie with the Chamber for America's worst climate obstructer. These are all the companies whose CEOs signed the Business Roundtable statement supporting climate action and supporting carbon pricing and are members of one of the two worst climate obstructers in America, at the same time. So that creates a little bit of a problem.

Now, I should go back to the Chamber one just briefly and put a caveat in here. We don't know who all the Chamber members are. It is a very secretive organization. Many of its members report that they are members of the organization, and that is how we can assemble a list like this. But if the company doesn't report that they are members, we don't know.

So this is not necessarily complete, but this is all that we can know out of this secretive, very oppositional, worst climate obstructer organization—the Chamber of Commerce.

There are some other odd discordances among these Business Roundtable leaders. We go back to Business Roundtable membership who signed on this; that is, companies like Google, Amazon, AT&T, and Verizon, which are on the BRT list. There is Verizon right there. They are donors to something called the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

The Competitive Enterprise Institute is the group that put that flagrant, some would say almost nutty, climate denier Myron Ebell onto the EPA transition team. The Competitive Enterprise Institute is a dramatic antagonist to either anything serious on climate

or a price on carbon. Yet companies that signed this Business Roundtable statement support the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

Many people will remember when we came to the floor in groups of Senators to talk about the web of denial and the web of front groups that the fossil fuel industry set up to hide their hands and do their dirty work and stop climate action in Congress. That is the Competitive Enterprise Institute right there—right there, right smack in the middle of the web of fossil-fuel-funded climate denial, and Google, Amazon, AT&T, and Verizon were all supporting that group while supporting the Business Roundtable.

Now, none of this would matter much if Congress was just a sideshow and it was really up to corporations to do their own thing, but that is not the case. Action in Congress is actually the main event in succeeding on climate. That is why the fossil fuel industry has worked so hard to set up this web to deny climate science and to obstruct climate action here in Congress.

So when these Business Roundtable companies come to Congress through their other groups and say, “Don’t bother on climate” or “Don’t do a carbon price,” it matters. And it makes it a little hard to really take action in Congress based on their statement that they support climate action and a carbon price when, through other groups, they are funding the opposition to the position that they claim to support.

So, to the BRT, thank you for what you did. I don’t want to under appreciate that. It is a big deal. It is a good, good thing. But now you have to make it real. You have to make it real in Congress. No more zero effort from you. No more zero effort from your trade associations. No more support for our biggest climate obstructers from you.

If you want the results of what you asked for, you have to align your actions in Congress with your values. Align what you say in that statement with what you do through your groups here in Congress. That ought not to be much to ask—to align what you do in Congress with what you say you want to do to the outside world.

I have a few suggestions, if you are interested. One, think about commissioning a lobbying and electioneering audit of your own company. If you are the CEO, commission an audit of your own company’s lobbying and electioneering so you actually know what your company is doing on climate.

I suspect a lot of the CEOs signed this in good faith. They don’t know. So commission an audit. Learn what your company is really doing on climate.

Do an audit of your trade associations. If you are a member of a trade association, get in there and see what they are up to. I bet that you will find that what I say is true.

Three, demand that your trade associations declare where they get their money. It seems obvious that the rea-

son that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers became the two worst climate obstructers in America is because they were paid to. If you, CEOs on the Business Roundtable, had known that, this might not have happened. We might not have been here by now.

It is very likely that the Chamber and the NAM leaders snuck up on you, taking floods of fossil fuel money that they didn’t tell you about and selling out their organizations to the fossil fuel industry, leaving you high and dry, having to explain why you are supporting the two worst climate obstructers in America.

So do your audit, and then give those trade associations a deadline to align with your policy or you will quit—you will quit on the deadline if they haven’t. Don’t let them slow-walk you through endless discussion and process while they are still loading up on fossil fuel money and running fossil fuel errands in your names. Don’t let them do that.

Finally—finally—recommendation five, ask your lawyers. Ask your lawyers, particularly if you are on the board of climate obstructer groups: If these groups were trafficking in fraudulent information, what is the board’s responsibility? That is a lawyer question.

If they loaded up with fossil fuel money, how was your due diligence on the board of that organization in detecting that warning signal that your trade association had loaded up with fossil fuel money and was arguing against your position when it came to Congress, carrying the water for the fossil fuel industry? Your lawyers may have some advice about whether you have met due diligence.

Final point, climate is not really a partisan issue. It wasn’t in 2007 to 2009, when Senator CARDIN and I got here and the Senate had multiple bipartisan climate bills.

It wasn’t in 2008, when Republican John McCain had climate on his party platform as the Republican nominee. It all started with Citizens United in 2010, when the fossil fuel industry was allowed to trade up its political weaponry from muskets, corporate PACs, to tactical nukes, unlimited spending, secret super PACs, phony front groups—the whole apparatus of climate obstruction.

Today, as a result of that, the Republican Party has been so captured that on climate it is little more than the political wing of the fossil fuel industry. It doesn’t have to be that way.

To these big companies who signed this wonderful pledge: Fix your politics, push back on the fossil fuel obstruction, clean up your obstructer trade associations, wake up your sleepers, and make climate a real priority in Congress, and you will see what looks like magic begin to happen.

For you all, it is less time to wake up to climate change than it is time to

wake up to your own political indifference and presumably unknowing complicity in the political logjam on climate action that the fossil fuel industry has deliberately created here in Congress.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his longstanding leadership in the U.S. Senate on addressing the concerns of climate change. He has been there every week, every day, leading us to take action to prevent the horrors of climate change.

We have made some progress but not enough under his leadership. We have to do more, as he points out, and what he just told our colleagues. But I just really want to thank the Senator—as I look at the wildfires in the West, I look at the frequency of the hurricanes, when I look at the receding shorelines in Maryland, as I look at our efforts on the Chesapeake Bay—and recognize that if we don’t do what we need to do, what science tells us we could do on carbon emissions, we are doing this at our own peril.

It is not just America. It is the global communities. It is our leadership globally. Senator WHITEHOUSE and I traveled with other Members of the Senate to the climate meetings, and we made progress. We have to get back to it. I just want to thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his leadership.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. President, on Sunday, the Washington National Cathedral marked the 200,000 American lives lost to COVID-19 by tolling the Bourdon Bell 200 times—once for every 1,000 lives lost. Nearly 113,000 people have died since May 15, when the House of Representatives passed a comprehensive COVID-19 relief package known as the Heroes Act.

As of September 20, the 7-day moving average for new infections was over 41,000. The 7-day moving average for new deaths was almost 800. Put another way, from a fatality standpoint, we have the equivalent of the 9/11 terrorist attack every 4 days. The United States, which has 4.3 percent of the world’s population, accounts for 21.1 percent of the COVID-19 deaths worldwide.

When President Trump delivered his Inaugural Address in January 2017, he stated:

This American carnage stops right here and stops right now. We are one nation. . . . We share one heart, one home, and one glorious destiny. . . . So to all Americans in every city near and far, small and large, from mountain to mountain, from ocean to ocean, hear these words—you will never be ignored again.

Fast forward to last week when President Trump—referring to the total U.S. fatalities—said:

If you take the blue states out, we’re at a level that I don’t think anybody in the world would be at. We’re really at a very low level.

Of course, talking about COVID infection.

President Trump has said many appalling things. Dividing America during a pandemic into so-called blue and red States and devaluing the lives of Americans from blue States may be one of the most appalling things so far.

As former Secretary of Homeland Security and Republican Governor of Pennsylvania, Tom Ridge, remarked, "It's so unworthy of a president. It's beyond despicable. It's soulless. It's almost unspeakable in the middle of the pandemic to try to divide the country on a political basis when COVID-19 is really bipartisan."

Not only was President Trump's statement appalling, beyond despicable, and soulless, it belies the fact that COVID-19 does not care about State boundaries or any other boundaries. The States that President Trump lost in the 2016 election currently account for about 12,000 more COVID deaths than the States that he won. But the 11 States with the highest number of COVID-19 cases per million residents are all States that he won, and 14 of the 19 States with caseloads above the national average are States that he won. So the grim gap is closing, but it really should not matter because we are the United States of America. I wish President Trump could understand that.

Speaker PELOSI has stated that she intends to keep the House in session until Congress passes another comprehensive COVID-19 relief package. And I agree with the Speaker.

The Senate may adjourn as soon as it passes the fiscal year 2020 continuing resolution to keep the Federal Government open. I fear this would be a grave mistake and an abdication of our duty. The Senate should take up the Heroes Act. The so-called skinny amendments Senators JOHNSON and MCCONNELL brought to the floor over the past few weeks were so woefully inadequate they failed the fundamental test of serving as the beginning block for a bipartisan compromise. Even President Trump indicated the Senate Republicans need to do more.

I would like to take the next few minutes to outline some of the things we need to do to respond appropriately to the twin health and economic crises our Nation faces.

Remember when President Trump promised that the novel coronavirus would magically disappear as the weather got warmer? Well, that did not happen, and now summer has turned to autumn; the weather is starting to get cold again; and the flu season is approaching.

The next COVID-19 supplemental package should include provisions that increase the Federal Matching Assistance Payment, FMAP, and maintain Medicaid payments and permanently expand telehealth flexibilities that have increased healthcare access to patients around the country and address health disparities that COVID-19 pandemic has worsened.

The Urban Institute estimates 12 million additional Americans will turn to

Medicaid for access to affordable healthcare amid the pandemic. In my State, more than 45,000 Marylanders are newly enrolled in Medicaid. At the same time, State revenues are plummeting, leaving States facing budget deficits that could amount to \$555 billion through 2022.

If unaddressed, these budget shortfalls will lead States to making dramatic cuts to Medicaid, just as they did during the past economic downturns, at a time when those newly and previously enrolled need healthcare the most. The National Governors Association has called on Congress to further raise the FMAP and maintain access to essential Medicaid benefits.

Another important policy that will increase access to healthcare services during the COVID-19 pandemic is permanently extending telehealth permissions and privileges implemented under the CARES Act. Specifically, Congress should permanently remove regulatory barriers so that patients in rural, underserved, and urban areas can use telehealth to see their primary care providers, mental health counselors, and chronic disease management teams. Reimbursement for these services should adequately reflect the care delivered and allow patients to use their homes to receive these services. Telehealth increases access to care in areas with workforce shortages and for individuals who live far away from healthcare facilities, have limited mobility or transportation, or have other barriers to accessing care.

This is a bipartisan proposal to expand telehealth. It makes abundant sense. We have done it. Now let's make it permanent. That helps rural America; that helps people who have a hard time with transportation to get to where they need to be; it is more efficient; and it is safer. Let's make sure that is done before we leave.

At a time when many are unable to visit their health provider in person, we must depend on telehealth to deliver high-quality healthcare to millions of Americans around the country.

We have seen how COVID-19 has disproportionately affected communities of color, highlighting how the United States fails to extend critical resources, support, and healthcare access to these communities. According to the data from the CDC, communities of color experience higher rates of hospitalization and death from COVID-19 than White people do. Black Americans, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives are five times more likely to be hospitalized than White people are.

African-American Marylanders account for 30 percent of our State's population but 41 percent of its COVID fatalities. Marylanders of Latin American descent account for 17 percent of the State's population but 21 percent of its cases.

This is why the next supplemental package must focus on and contain policies that address health disparities that have been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I have authored two bills focused on addressing health disparities: One, the REACH Act, with Senator SCOTT of South Carolina; and, two, the COVID-19 Health Disparities Action Act with Senator MENENDEZ. Both bills create targeted grant programs that would help community-based organizations and local health departments provide culturally appropriate outreach, education, and health services to Black, Latino, indigenous, and our communities of color. Both bills are important steps to rectifying the ills of systemic racism from going forward.

Communities of color have long-standing and tragically appropriate mistrust with the medical community, for good reason, sadly. Our government deliberately misled Black patients and research participants during the Tuskegee Syphilis Study. Today, physicians still undertreat or underdiagnose pain in patients of color. The REACH Act and the COVID-19 Health Disparities Action Act should be included in the next COVID-19 supplemental to help promote trust within the communities of color for future COVID-19 responses, as we look beyond the pandemic.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, our State and local governments have faced significant financial challenges to meet declining revenues, as well as emergency costs related to COVID-19. It is well beyond time we listen to those on the ground dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and provide them the resources they need.

What does this mean for communities back home? For our municipalities, it is funding for first responders and community services. For our counties, it is funding for schools. For our States, it is funding for public health.

The revenue losses our State, county, and local governments face are dramatic, and they threaten to cause deep, lasting cuts to public safety, education, public health, and other critical essential services that will adversely affect far beyond the public health battle against COVID-19.

Our Governors have issued a bipartisan plea. Governor Cuomo of New York, a Democrat, and Governor Hogan of Maryland, a Republican, who are the chair and previous chair of the National Governors Association, respectively, joined with all of our Nation's Governors—all—in April to say they need help from the Federal Government.

They need help to maintain critical missions of public safety, public health, and public education with at least \$500 billion for our States and additional funding for local governments beyond what we already provided under the CARES Act.

The Heroes Act, which has passed the House, provides \$875 billion for our State and local governments. Of that amount, \$500 billion goes to meet the State's needs, and \$375 billion goes to meet local government needs, with one-half to the counties and one-half to

municipalities. This funding goes directly to counties and local governments of all sizes to support their urgent needs. The funding is meant to address urgent COVID-19 response activities, and State and local governments may also use it to replace lost revenue to avoid making draconian cuts to essential services.

That would go a long way to meeting the needs of our local first responders, our police, our firefighters, our sanitation workers, and our educators.

The Senate Republicans' HEALS Act, in its most recent iteration, provides no new funding to help State and local governments; rather, they merely extend the deadline for use using CARES moneys. That is not adequate. We must do more.

This is too little, too late. Our State and local communities in Maryland have already allocated funding for programs that support renters, small businesses, and support frontline workers who face increased risk of exposure to COVID-19. Those dollars are spoken for.

I urge my colleagues to recognize the lasting harm the failure to support our State and local governments will cause and support the NGA's bipartisan request to provide additional funding to State and local governments.

If we learned anything when the school year ended so abruptly this past spring, it is a greater appreciation for our educators and the work they provide for our students in the classroom. It is so difficult to duplicate the interaction between educators and students, yet our colleagues across the aisle appear to be unwilling to provide our local school systems with the resources they need to allow school systems to educate students safely this fall.

Our local school leaders are making incredibly difficult decisions while facing political pressures from the Trump administration to ignore public health recommendations from Federal, State, and local officials; legitimate concerns from educators on the safety of returning to the classroom; and questions from parents who need answers on how to continue their child's education while meeting their own work responsibilities.

With dwindling State and local government revenues because of COVID-19, the school leaders have already started to face budget crunches even as schools' financial needs have increased things like cleaning supplies now necessary to meet CDC public health guidance, educational technology, and trainings for educators to meet the new demands of online education.

Without additional Federal resources, we fail to provide our local school leaders with the tools necessary to strike the balance between maintaining the highest quality level of education for our children while protecting student and educator health.

The Heroes Act provides \$100 billion for a State-level Fiscal Stabilization Fund for education, with \$90 billion for

States to support their public institutions of education. In Maryland, this would provide nearly \$900 million for our local school districts for meeting the needs of growing numbers of low-income students and our children with special needs; retaining educators vital to the education of our children; and ensuring that schools have resources to improve the virtual learning environment that frustrated so many students, parents, and educators last spring.

This funding would rightly support the decisions of local school and public health officials on how schools may reopen in the fall, whether virtual or in-person or hybrid. It does not attempt to coerce school districts into reopening their classroom doors in an unsafe manner as the only way to receive critically necessary Federal funds.

The Federal Government should provide local leaders with adequate resources to support well-informed and reasoned public health decisions rather than dangerously mandating school reopenings. In addition, the Federal Government needs to take the leadership in eliminating the digital divide. Access to reliable internet service should be available to every household in America.

The best action Congress can take to help small businesses is to provide State and local governments, health providers, and first responders with the resources they need to protect our communities from COVID-19, as I mentioned a moment ago. I am proud to be the ranking Democrat on the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee. I have worked very closely with Senator RUBIO on proposals. First, we have to get this COVID-19 under control. Only after it is safe for small businesses to resume full operations and safe for parents to send their children to school will our economy truly begin to recover.

Getting the virus under control is especially important for small businesses in the food services, hospitality, live events, travel and tourism sectors. Businesses in those sectors are especially reliant on large gatherings in order to make a profit.

Restaurants, for example, have been able to make up for lost indoor dining capacity by increasing their outdoor dining capacity, which will become increasingly difficult in many parts of the country as the weather gets colder and more inclement.

Similarly, communities that rely on tourism revenues generated during the winter months, such as Deep Creek Lake in my home State of Maryland, are likely to experience decreased cashflow this year due to the pandemic. Employers on the Eastern Shore missed their prime summer months. Congress cannot leave small businesses and the communities that rely on them out in the cold.

In addition to getting the pandemic under control, Congress must build on the lessons learned during past economic downturns. The most important

lesson is that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to rescue the economy during a crisis. To help the most employers we can, Congress must preserve the multiple support tools in the toolkit.

There is already bipartisan consensus that we must provide small businesses with a second Paycheck Protection Program loan. More than 3 months ago, Senators COONS, SHAHEEN, and I introduced legislation to create the Prioritized Paycheck Protection Program, which would provide vulnerable small businesses experiencing significant losses due to COVID-19 with a second capital infusion. Our proposal—P4—would allow small businesses that have 100 or fewer employees to receive a second PPP loan if they can demonstrate a loss of revenue of 50 percent or more due to the pandemic. The bill would also reserve \$25 billion for small businesses with 10 or fewer employees and extend the deadline to apply for an initial PPP loan through the end of this year.

There is also bipartisan agreement on the need to improve the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program, EIDL. I support Senator ROSEN's and Senator WARREN's efforts to shore up the EIDL Program so that more small businesses have access to the long-term, low-interest rate loans the program makes available. With their maximum loan amount of \$2 million and repayment terms as long as 30 years, EIDLs provide small businesses with flexibility, capital that they can use to retool their businesses to respond to COVID-19.

There is also bipartisan agreement on the need to expand the employee retention tax credit, which is a provision from legislation I introduced with Senator WYDEN that was included in the CARES Act. The House acted on this bipartisan agreement. The Heroes Act makes substantial enhancements to this program so that it could benefit close to 60 million workers and over 6 million businesses.

If the Senate fails to act now—before adjourning—to support small businesses by getting this pandemic under control and providing capital to our small businesses, our communities will pay a heavy price for that inaction, as many more small businesses will close their doors, and I am afraid they will do it permanently.

Studies have shown that maintaining the employer-employee relationship is key to a swift, robust recovery. With tens of millions of Americans relying on unemployment benefits and permanent job losses on the rise, it is critical that we do all we can to keep workers connected to their jobs and prevent further layoffs. I am disappointed that, despite bipartisan agreement on several of the measures needed to support American small businesses struggling to survive COVID-19, the response to the pandemic has turned into a partisan fight.

For the sake of our communities and small businesses, I urge my Republican

colleagues and President Trump to accept Speaker PELOSI and Senator SCHUMER's offer to meet Democrats in the middle so we can pass a bipartisan bill that helps our communities get COVID under control and begin the recovery process.

The Heroes Act also extends the weekly \$600 emergency Federal unemployment payment. This special benefit lapsed in July. President Trump's program to provide \$300 a week in emergency benefits through FEMA is a weak half measure, and Congress must do more. These extra 6 weeks will expire very shortly, and it comes out of the FEMA funds, which are desperately needed as we know how many emergencies are occurring throughout our country with the wildfires and the hurricanes.

The full benefits the Heroes Act provides would strengthen the critical safety net for the record number of Americans who are unemployed as America faces its most serious economic challenge since the Great Depression.

By way of example in Maryland, we are seeing first-time claims for unemployment benefits at a rate of about 13,000 a week, peaking in early May, with nearly 110,000 new weekly claims filed. We have seen the total number of filings since March exceed 1.5 million. These are numbers that cry out for us to extend the unemployment benefits. We really need to do that, and we need to do that before we leave.

These are some, but not all, of the issues we must address immediately and for a sustained period. Former President Harry Truman had a sign on his desk in the Oval Office that said: "The buck stops here." "Passing the buck" means something entirely different to President Trump. On March 13, 2020, as we began to grasp the magnitude and impacts of the coronavirus, President Trump said: "I don't take responsibility at all." That may be the most honest and accurate thing he has said since he has become President. We have ample evidence to take him seriously. Therefore, it is up to Congress to provide the leadership and relief Americans desperately need.

The House has done its part in passing the Heroes Act. It is now time for the Senate to act.

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

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

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, here we are again. It is late September, and the budget work has not been completed yet. It seems terribly familiar to this body, and it is frustrating. It is not as if no one knew September was coming; it was on the calendar. When I

first looked at it in January this year, September already existed on the calendar.

It is not as if we didn't know what all the deadlines were. Everyone knew full well what all the deadlines were.

We can say it is the pandemic that slowed everything down, except for the fact that all of the appropriations work could have already been done, and much of the committee work could have been done. Some was done by the House but not completed. It can be done by the Senate, but it was not.

So here we are again, watching the countdown clock toward a government shutdown as we discuss what happens next.

Things have been tied up this week with what is called a continuing resolution. This body knows—others may not—that a continuing resolution is literally taking last year's appropriations bills, changing the dates, and moving them over to the new one. This particular continuing resolution stretches until December 11, when we would have to pick it up and pass more appropriations for another continuing resolution at that time.

The fight this week has been over whether we are going to support rural America and agriculture. The House originally drafted a continuing resolution that left out all of the agriculture projects that were in it. The Senate, obviously, threw a fit over that and asked: Why are we supporting everything, including benefits to Sri Lanka to get added to the House's proposal for the continuing resolution, but you won't do so for America's farmers?

So, in the back-and-forth conversation this week, the House had to extend. Then it went another day. Then the House finally put the agriculture projects back in—and still left in, by the way, benefit for Sri Lanka.

Our ongoing conversations continue, though, about airlines. On October 1, airlines across the country are going to lay off 100,000 people—100,000. We have asked for some engagement on the issue of these airlines. In the CARES Act, back in March, we gave an extension to those airline workers so that the airline workers and the airlines could still stay connected to each other even when we were in this downtime. We are getting very close to a vaccine. It is like we can see the light on the other end of the tunnel, but it is not a train this time; it is actually light. We are going to get through this pandemic, but for whatever reason, the House refuses to deal with the issue of how to help airline workers at all, not even to do half of what was done in the past, not even to do a portion of what was done in the CARES Act. It has been exceptionally frustrating.

It has been the same issue with the House in its not wanting to do anything on the Paycheck Protection Program. For the smallest businesses in America and for nonprofits, the House has put out a multitrillion-dollar proposal, and it doesn't even include anything for small businesses.

We have continued to ask how we can address the issue of small businesses here. How can we extend the Paycheck Protection Program and give a second round to the hardest hit businesses? We don't think it is that unreasonable. As we are nearing the end, we need to help them bridge the gap at this point, but for whatever reason, it is not included either as we work our way through this process.

Now, I don't know what will happen in the next few hours as we deal with the continuing resolution that will come from the House, but there is no reason we should be talking about a government shutdown again.

A year ago, I and Senator HASSAN, the Democratic Senator from New Hampshire, sat down to talk through how we could end government shutdowns forever so that government workers across the DC region and across the country would not be living in fear of being furloughed and so that Americans who would want to be able to connect with different agencies would be able to do that at all times, but we would still be able to have the arguments that are needed to be able to resolve budget issues.

It may be surprising to some people across the country that Republicans and Democrats don't agree on everything in the budget. Shocking, I know. We should be able to have that fight, though, on the budget, but it should not lead to a government shutdown in the process. Government shutdowns cost us money every time it happens.

So my and Senator HASSAN's simple resolution resolves the issue by just asking one question: Who needs pressure applied to them to deal with the issue, and what is the pressure that needs to be applied?

Our straightforward answer is this: Members of Congress and our staffs and the Office of Management and Budget and the White House should have the pressure applied to us to get it done. The easiest way to apply pressure to all of us is to take away our time. It is pretty straightforward.

Here is our proposal: If you get to the end of the budget year and the appropriations work is not done, we will have mandatory quorum calls in this body at 12 noon every single day, 7 days a week, until we get all of the appropriations work done. None of us could travel. We would all stay here in DC.

I will tell you that I really want to see my family on the weekends. I also have people back in my State with whom I have appointments whom I need to be able to see, and I have responsibilities there. I want to get back to my State of Oklahoma and be with those folks.

I am sure all of you would love to get back to Oklahoma, but you would probably head back to your States instead.

We want to be home. We want to be able to meet with our constituents. We want to take care of the practical needs that are there. The way to do that is to get our work done here.

I have had folks say: Well, just take away everyone's money. Say, "No budget, no pay." It makes a great bumper sticker. The problem is, as many people in this body know, there are a lot of folks in this body who are multimillionaires, and if they were honest, they would say their congressional salaries are rounding errors to their investments every month.

Good for you, but it is not a pressure point. Taking away your congressional salary is not an emphasis to actually get the work done.

Taking away time is a way to be able to press people to actually get their work done.

Senator HASSAN and I have worked it through the committee process; have passed it through the Homeland Security Committee; and have set it up. It has already been rule XIV'd, and it is on our Calendar now. At any moment, we in this body could determine to end government shutdowns. We will never have one again. If we get to the end of the fiscal year, a continuing resolution will kick in automatically, and we will all stay until we finish the negotiations for the appropriations work. However heated, however long that may take, we will stay and finish it until it is done.

It is the right thing for us to do, and it is the right way to handle it. It is not pressure on the Federal workers. The Federal workers don't have the ability to make the decision here.

Some people say: Well, those folks in DC can just tough it out anyway.

Well, it is not just those folks in DC, though there are a lot of folks in DC who are working very hard for Americans all over the country. Just in my State of Oklahoma, there are 4,300 Federal employees who work in agriculture, who work for Housing and Urban Development, who work for the FAA—who work for all kinds of entities that take care of families in Oklahoma. They also deserve the privilege of continuing their service to their neighbors, just as always, while we are resolving our differences here.

So my request is the same as it was last year: Why are we talking about the possibility of there being a government shutdown again when we could take that off the table forever with a straightforward, bipartisan proposal that says we will never again have a government shutdown?

We will work out our differences because we do have differences, but we will not hold Federal workers hostage in the process. We will just stay and work out our differences.

I look forward to seeing the vote on the continuing resolution and avoiding a shutdown again, but I look much more forward to never having shutdowns again when Senator HASSAN's and my bill is finally voted on and passed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Nevada.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE RUTH BADER GINSBURG

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, I stand here to honor the life and legacy of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

In everything Justice Ginsburg did—from her pivotal role in the fight for gender equality, to her storied legal career, to her serving on the DC Court of Appeals and, ultimately, as a member of the U.S. Supreme Court—throughout her life's journey, she used every ounce of her ability to give voice to the voiceless and build a more just and equitable world.

Justice Ginsburg was a lion on the bench. She ruled on monumental and historic cases, and the decisions she made—and even the dissents she wrote—have shaped this country and set us on a better path.

This remarkable woman inspired countless Americans to fight for the best of us even when it was hard, even when it was inconvenient. I know I wouldn't be here without Ruth Bader Ginsburg's leading the way. We have a responsibility to honor her legacy, her work, and the ethos of Justice Ginsburg. Part of her legacy was her decision to uphold the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act, and we have seen too many attempts to dismantle this key cornerstone of her legacy.

In my time as Senator, I have met countless Nevadans, and I have had the chance to speak with Americans from all across the country. I can say with certainty that there is no issue that matters more to the American people than their health, especially now.

This administration has worked since day one to take healthcare coverage and critical protections away from millions of Americans. It has failed time and again to dismantle the ACA through legislation, and it has also attempted to destroy and dismantle the ACA through the courts.

In one of my first actions as a Senator, I co-led and helped to introduce a resolution to defend the Affordable Care Act's constitutionality against this administration's assault. In my first speech on the Senate floor, I called on the Senate to take it up and pass it. I cannot even begin to count the number of Nevadans who have shared how they would be affected by the ACA's demise. Everything is at stake if these individuals and these families are denied access to care.

Justice Ginsburg's replacement will help to decide whether individuals with preexisting conditions can be denied coverage and, thus, be left behind. Let me be clear: What this potentially means is that any of us with a preexisting condition could no longer obtain health insurance.

This next Justice will decide if we see an end to the tax credits that make healthcare coverage affordable for middle-income families.

This next Justice will decide if we see an end to preventive care without copays.

This next Justice will decide if we see an end to the ability of young adults,

until the age of 26, to stay on their parents' insurance.

This next Justice will decide if we see an end to expanded Medicaid benefits, which have helped over 200,000 Nevadans get coverage.

This next Justice is going to decide who has healthcare during an unprecedented and deadly pandemic that has already, tragically, taken the lives of over 200,000 Americans.

This next Justice will also decide if the nearly 7 million Americans who have already tested positive for COVID can be denied healthcare coverage because they contracted a disease that this administration initially ignored and has been unable or unwilling to combat with a national plan.

So much hangs in the balance for the American people. Millions could lose healthcare because of this Supreme Court pick. We could go back to a world in which people with preexisting conditions could not afford to pay for lifesaving medicine or treatment. Using the courts to take away the American people's healthcare, especially at this moment in our Nation's history, is not only cruel—it is dangerous.

Amid a global pandemic and the worst economy in generations, our top priority right now should be the needs of the American people—the relief and care that matches the urgency of this crisis. We cannot afford to play political games or to threaten the American people's health coverage when they need it the most. The American people deserve better. They deserve the stability and security of healthcare coverage for themselves and their loved ones.

I ask that my colleagues truly listen to the American people, who need us now more than ever.

I had hoped that my Republican colleagues would have honored their own precedent in this process—the McConnell rule—and ensured that the American people would have their say at the ballot box before filling any vacancy. Instead of political gamesmanship, I ask that my colleagues honor the dignity of our democratic institutions and the health of the American people.

In 2015, when asked how she would like to be remembered, Justice Ginsburg responded: "As someone who . . . [helped] repair tears in her society, to make things a little better through the use of whatever ability she has."

That is how she wanted to be remembered.

We, too, have the ability to repair tears in our democracy, and we, too, have the ability to make sure things are better for all Americans by ensuring that their health remains protected.

I urge my colleagues to follow Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's example and honor her life and her life's work.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am on the floor today to talk about what the Senate and the House ought to be doing before we leave town for the election, and that is helping people who are in need because of the impact of the coronavirus.

I know this is the week when we are focused on the passing of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and that is appropriate. There is a lot of discussion also about filling her seat.

We should, of course, all take time to mourn our Nation's loss, but we are also in the middle of an unprecedented healthcare and economic crisis. I think we have a responsibility to continue working on COVID-19 legislation to respond to those challenges.

Since this crisis began, Congress has actually come together repeatedly, as Republicans and Democrats, House and Senate, and working with the White House, to pass five coronavirus relief bills—legislation to address both the healthcare crisis and the economic free fall that was caused by the virus and the shutdowns. The biggest of these bills was the one you hear about the most—the roughly \$2 trillion CARES Act that was passed by a vote of 96 to 0.

Again, these have been bipartisan efforts up until now. Unfortunately, since May, when the last of these five bills was enacted, partisanship has prevailed over good policy, and Washington has been paralyzed, unable to come together for the public good.

Last week I came to the floor to highlight how this dynamic has played out with regard to a single issue that has become strictly important for so many people in my home State of Ohio and around the country. That is the expanded Federal unemployment insurance supplement included in the CARES Act back in March.

I had a tele-townhall last night. I am trying to do a tele-townhall or a Facebook Live townhall every week during the pandemic, in part just to stay in touch with people because it is so hard back home now to visit with people in person. Again last night, I had two callers call in, both of whom are taking advantage of the current \$300-per-week Federal supplement provided really by the Trump administration, and they talked to me about how they are going to plan for the future.

These are individuals who don't have a job to go back to. One, by the way, is a musician who makes his living playing music—the piano and singing and so on—at long-term care facilities, nursing homes, and each one of his previous clients has said that he is not welcome to come back now, for good reason. But that makes his life pretty

tough because that is what he does for a living.

So his question to me was this: You know, look, I really appreciate the 300 bucks. I need it to get by. And I got my rent, I got my car payment, and what are you guys going to do about that?

Well, the truth is, nothing at this point, and that is too bad because that \$300 supplement has now ended. In effect, what the President did to continue some help at the Federal level had limits because he did it under the only choice he had, really, which was the Disaster Relief Fund, and that has now run out. So that is where we are.

Early on in the pandemic, both Republicans and Democrats recognized the need to bolster the State-run unemployment insurance programs to help offset the massive job losses we saw in March and April. The initial amount was \$600 per week, and it was provided by the CARES Act. It came at a big cost to taxpayers. It also provided an income source that made the difference for a lot of folks in the State of Ohio and around the country.

During those early months, you remember the government was actually shutting down a lot of businesses, and workers were losing their jobs through no fault of their own, like this individual last night—through no fault of his own not having a job.

As the year has gone on, we have made progress. We slowed the spread of the coronavirus in most States. We have added more testing and personal protective gear. More and more parts of our economy have been able to reopen in a safe and sustainable manner, and that is great. With the reopening, hiring has picked back up, and we now have far fewer people on unemployment insurance than we did at the beginning of this pandemic.

Unemployment is now about 8.4 percent. That was the number for August—down from over 15 percent back in the spring. That is a big change. Over 4 million jobs have been added. At the same time, 8.4 percent is still high—very high. Remember, we were at about 3.5 percent in February of this year.

By the way, February was the 19th straight month of wage increases of over 3 percent. We had record-low unemployment for many sectors of our economy, and here we are at 8.4 percent. So we are not out of the woods yet. We still have a way to go. Ohio's unemployment number just came out the day before yesterday. For August, it was 8.9 percent. So 10 percent unemployment is something we are now under. In fact, we are under 9 percent, which is way, way faster than the projections. But still, 8.9 percent unemployment in Ohio is something that we need to focus on.

I will say that overall, we are going in the right direction and that unemployment claims, I think, are now either steadily dropping or holding level in almost every State. That is certainly true in Ohio.

So it is fair that Congress wanted to take another look at that original unemployment insurance supplement, which was set to expire at the beginning of August, and it did expire, and we wanted to look at it to see what the new supplement ought to be given the changing economy and given some of the improvements that we saw and also given the need for more workers as more businesses were reopening.

Now, \$600 per week was a relatively generous benefit—to the point that the Congressional Budget Office, the non-partisan group around here that gives us advice, said: If you kept that \$600 until next year—which is what the Democrats proposed in their Heroes Act—8 out of 10 people getting 600 bucks a week would be paid more on unemployment insurance than they would be at their jobs.

In other words, you would be making more money unemployed than you would if you were working. That is not the way unemployment insurance is supposed to work. That is not good for an economy that is trying to reopen.

I have been all over my State and talked to employers—small, mid, large-size employers. I have talked to the nonprofits. I have talked to people who are working hard to try to provide care to people in the healthcare sector. They all tell me the same thing: That \$600 is a problem because some people were not coming back to work because, again, for most of those people, they could make more on unemployment than they could working. So we needed to adjust it. Yet Democrats insisted 600 or nothing—or nothing—and so we got nothing.

Some of us had proposed \$300. In that case, some people would be getting paid more on unemployment, but most would not. In fact, most of them would be getting less than some percentage of their salaries. But, again, if you lose your job through no fault of your own, particularly because of a government decision to shut down your sector—say a movie theater or a bowling alley or a bar—it seems to me that we ought to be helping.

So the \$300 that we proposed was to go until toward the end of the year, but Democrats said no—kind of a “my way or the highway” approach, like it is going to be \$600 or we are going to give these people nothing. We gave people nothing. To me, that was a big mistake.

A number of us came to the floor and actually said: Let's continue \$600 for a week so we can negotiate something.

Democrats said: No. We want to end it. We don't even want to have it temporarily at \$600 to be able to negotiate something between Republicans and Democrats.

That is too bad.

When Congress failed to act, President Trump and his administration stepped in, and they said: \$300 is about the right number. We will provide the States a \$300 supplement through what is called the Disaster Relief Fund.

Now, in the CARES legislation we talked about earlier, which was the \$2 trillion legislation that passed 96 to 0 around here, a lot of money went out for various causes—for our hospitals, for our schools, and for our families through unemployment insurance. But it also provided some funding for what is called the Disaster Relief Fund for COVID-19 purposes. So the President took some of that money for COVID-19 purposes out of the Disaster Relief Fund and said: We are going to, for 6 weeks, allow the States to use this \$300 supplement if they choose to do so.

They also encouraged the States to provide their own match. What happened was, every State but two took the government up on that. So the vast majority of States said: Yes, we will do it.

They didn't add their match, by the way, but they did take the 300 bucks, and a lot of people have been helped by that because over the past 6 weeks, that funding has been available. Unfortunately, sometimes it got paid as a lump sum because by the time the State systems figured out how to administer it, you know, we were close to the end of the 6 weeks. But people knew that was coming. They knew they had 300 bucks for paying their rent, paying their car payment, paying their mortgage, and that was helpful. That was helpful.

Now we are at a point where President Trump's emergency Lost Wages Assistance Program, which is what that was called—the Lost Wages Assistance Program under the Disaster Relief Fund—has tapped out. Forty-four billion dollars was made available to the States, leaving \$25 billion in that Disaster Relief Fund because that \$25 billion was what was projected to be necessary to deal with the natural disasters.

So that is where we are today. Forty-four billion has been depleted. People who have had unemployment insurance since this disaster began are not going to have it now. It is going to end. For many people, it ended this week; for some, next week; for some, the week before.

The point is, we as a Congress need to act. My view is, let's provide some more funding for the Disaster Relief Fund, at least. If we can't come together with a big COVID-19 package that helps the schools, that helps small businesses with the Paycheck Protection Program, which I support extending, that helps with regard to getting more money for testing and getting our vaccine more quickly and getting the therapies up, let's at least provide the administration with some funding in the Disaster Relief Fund so they can continue to respond to need.

Let's also provide them that funding because they need it for natural disasters. What do I mean by that? Well, the other thing that has happened in the last 6 weeks, as you probably noticed, is that we have had a lot of natural disasters in the West with fires and in the

South with hurricanes. So that funding left in the Disaster Relief Fund ought to be supplemented for that purpose as well.

This is a temporary program meant to provide a bridge while Congress acts. And it would be great if Congress were to act, but, frankly, I am getting kind of discouraged about Congress's ability to come together again on a bipartisan basis, as much as I wish we would.

I have spoken on the floor about what I think I can see as the points of compromise and the overlap between our two approaches because there is a lot of it. Every single Republican save 1, 52 Members—a majority of the Senate—voted for a proposal a couple weeks ago that was viewed as a targeted proposal that did provide help for COVID-19 for families, for small businesses, and for healthcare.

Democrats had their own idea, which is the \$3.5 trillion that they wanted. Ours was about \$500 billion. There is something in between there. We could come together with something that is sensible, but it looks like that is unlikely.

So at a minimum, let's move forward with these unemployment insurance supplements that we have been doing. Let's give the administration the ability to do it again through the Disaster Relief Fund. This funding shortage would be easy for us to put into the legislation that is likely to come before this Chamber in the next 24 hours, which is the continuing resolution. That is the funding that is going to pay for government to continue operating.

You know, Congress is supposed to pass individual appropriations bills. There are 12 of them. We didn't do them this year because of the partisan gridlock around here, so once again we are turning to a continuing resolution to provide the funding going forward.

The House is acting this week, and we are going to act this week or early next week, as I understand it. It would be the perfect place to put more funding into this Disaster Relief Fund for us to be able to provide that \$300 benefit that the administration has been providing to all States but two and to also provide for more help for the natural disasters that are upon us.

Senator THOM TILLIS and I have proposed legislation to do just that. We have a bill out there that we hope Congress will be willing to pass, and we are also interested in adding it as an amendment to the continuing resolution, to the appropriations bill that is on its way through here.

With Congress deadlocked on how to come up with a broader solution for COVID-19, let's at least do this. Let's say to the administration: We want you to continue this program that is now in place. The States know how it operates. The States have been implementing it.

My home State of Ohio has provided funding to people through this. We are appreciative of it.

Our proposal is very straightforward. It simply appropriates \$86.6 billion to

replenish the Disaster Relief Fund, first to give FEMA the resources it needs to fully and effectively respond to the natural disasters that are hitting parts of our country hard right now and those that are yet to come. The money won't be wasted; it will be spent for appropriate things.

Second, it would allow the \$300 per week for the Lost Wages Assistance Program to continue through November 21, giving Congress what I hope would be more than enough time to come up with a broader solution to the COVID-19 issue. But at least through the period of time between now and just before Thanksgiving, people would be able to know they will continue to get this \$300-per-week supplement to be able to put food on the table, pay the rent, or pay the car payment or the mortgage, and we as a Congress will be able to say to the people we represent: We haven't forgotten about you. You lost your jobs through no fault of your own. We ought to be able to continue providing some help through this interim period.

This isn't about political wins and losses; this is about lives and livelihoods that are at stake. I hope my colleagues will join me in a bipartisan effort to support this important, commonsense legislation so we can bolster our response to the COVID-19 unemployment crisis and to the natural disasters that are currently facing our country.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE RUTH BADER GINSBURG

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to one of my personal heroes, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. She spent her life in service to the American people, quite literally. Whether the Supreme Court was hearing arguments about civil rights, reproductive rights for women, protecting our environment, our precious water and air, or standing up for our workers, Justice Ginsburg could be counted on to put the needs of the American people first every time.

She may not have looked like much of a fighter, but this tiny Jewish grandmother in the lace collar punched far above her weight. The American people were so fortunate to have her on their side of the ring. I feel fortunate as a woman in America. My daughter and my granddaughters, too, have known she was there over and over again, fighting for us.

That certainly was the case on healthcare. I have said over and over again on the floor of the Senate that healthcare isn't political; it is personal for each one of us. It is personal. Justice Ginsburg understood that in her bones. As a person who had experienced her own health challenges and health challenges in her family, she knew that when a beloved spouse is diagnosed with cancer or a child with a fever needs to go to the emergency room, politics is the last thing on their minds.

When people tell me their healthcare stories, they don't start by telling me whether they are a Democrat or a Republican. That is because when it comes to healthcare and the health of our families, it simply doesn't matter.

People in Michigan just want to know that if they or their loved ones get sick or are hurt, they are going to be able to take them to the doctor and get the healthcare they need. Unfortunately, with the loss of Justice Ginsburg, Michigan families and families all across the country have an extra reason to be very concerned right now.

One week after the election—just 1 week after the election—the Supreme Court will hear arguments in the case that could overturn the Affordable Care Act, overturn everything, all of the protections—including, of course, the preexisting conditions coverage—all of it. By the way, the President of the United States, Donald Trump, has weighed in and is in favor of having that happen.

Everything is at stake, including coverage for 17 million people through the expansion of Medicaid, where minimum-wage workers right now in States like Michigan that have expanded Medicaid no longer have to pick between minimum-wage jobs and not working and having healthcare. It is so important.

Also at stake is the ability for children to remain on their parents' health plans until age 26, which has transformed so many families' opportunities and young people's opportunities, and coverage for preventive services like cancer screening and maternity care.

Prior to the Affordable Care Act, you had to get extra coverage for maternity care. It wasn't viewed as basic. It was basic for me when I was having my children, and for women across the country, it is pretty basic. It wasn't viewed as basic, essential care. It now is under the Affordable Care Act.

Also at risk are mental health care and treatment for substance use disorders, lower prescription drug prices for seniors, and protections for people with preexisting conditions.

It is estimated that about half of Michigan families include someone with a preexisting condition, everything from heart disease to asthma, to high blood pressure, to cancer. Nationwide, we are talking about 130 million people. How many more people now, after COVID-19, will have a preexisting condition?

In other words, what happens in the next few months—what happens in terms of filling another Supreme Court vacancy, as well as what happens in the election—could have life-or-death consequences for Michigan families and families across the country.

In case anyone has forgotten, we are in the middle of a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic. More than 200,000 Americans have already lost their lives, and unfortunately that number is going up every single day. In my own State, nearly 7,000 people have lost their lives—7,000

mothers and dads, grandmas and grandpas, brothers and sisters, children and friends. Even though some have survived COVID-19, they may be left with long-term health issues, from heart damage to breathing difficulties, to neurological problems, which, as I said before, creates preexisting conditions.

This is not the time to be ripping healthcare away from American families. There is never a good time but certainly not now. Yet that is exactly the scenario we could be facing.

As Justice Ginsburg said, "Healthcare is not like a vegetable or other items one is at liberty to buy or not to buy." When a Michigan single mom discovers a lump and finds out that she has breast cancer, she can't just hope it will go away. When a Michigan senior with diabetes needs insulin, he can't just wait for a big sale and stock up when the price is right. When a child spikes a high fever in the middle of the night, her parents can't just tell her: Well, you know, the money is tight right now, so you are going to have to wait to see a doctor. That is the horror for all of us as parents, that our child will get sick and we won't be able to take them to the doctor.

Healthcare isn't political; it is personal. It isn't about policy; it is about people—people. It is about the people in our States who sent us here to fight on their behalf.

I sincerely hope that by the time the Senate votes on the next Supreme Court Justice—if, unfortunately, it comes before the people have their say about who should be making that nomination and confirming that appointment—if that is going to be rushed through, jammed through by this Senate, I hope there will be four U.S. Senators on the other side of the aisle who will have the courage to stand up for the people who need healthcare—and, frankly, that is all of us.

One thing I do know for sure is that the American people are courageous. Time and again, they have called us and written letters and have even come to DC to make their voices heard. From the amazing Little Lobbyists to ALS warrior Ady Barkan, to my friend Lauren Kovach, who fights so hard to find a cure for Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, these folks would probably rather be spending their time doing something else, but they understand that healthcare isn't a luxury; it is a necessity.

This should not be political. It is personal to each and every one of us. Again and again, people across the country have stepped up. They have gotten engaged. They have put their passion to work protecting our healthcare. Their voices and the voices of millions of Americans have made the difference in this Chamber to the majority in this Chamber—saying no to repealing the Affordable Care Act and ripping healthcare away from millions of Americans. That only happened because people stood up and

made their voices known and were actively engaged in saying what was important to them and their families.

It is easy to throw up our hands and give in and let the sadness and feelings of loss for Justice Ginsburg and all of the frustrations and chaos and the suffering take over all of us, but RBG would never let that happen. If she were here right now, she would say: No, no, no. This is the moment to focus and engage and to fight even harder.

When, as a Harvard Law student, she was asked by the dean why she felt entitled to take a slot that otherwise would have gone to a man, she didn't let that faze her. When she struggled to land a job after graduation, she took to teaching at Rutgers School of Law and hid her second pregnancy under baggy clothes until her contract was renewed. She later challenged the New Jersey law that forced pregnant teachers to quit their jobs. When she was diagnosed with cancer for the first time in 1999, she fought back and kept on fighting for more than 20 years.

It is time now for all of us to fight, all of us who care about our freedoms and our very way of life in this country. It is time to fight like our beloved RBG, like she did everyday of her life for us.

Justice Ginsburg once said this: "Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you." I am asking the American people right now to join us in this fight. This is not a done deal. It is not over, and we all as Senators will be held accountable for what we do.

Call your Senators, write emails and letters, talk to your friends and neighbors, and let them know what is at stake—from healthcare and reproductive rights for women to protecting our air and clean water, to the capacity to be able to collectively bargain for wages and safety and benefits, to voting rights and civil rights. We can go on and on. It is all on the line right now. We need to step up and fight and not assume anything is a done deal. We need to hold our Republican colleagues accountable.

Don't let them get away with taking healthcare away from millions of people. We did it before when we stopped the repeal of the Affordable Care Act. I think we have to fight now to do the same thing and vote like your life and the lives of your family depend on it, because they actually do.

Justice Ginsburg dedicated her life to making our country more fair, more free, and more just. Now is the time to continue her fight for our future, for our children, and for our grandchildren.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

SUPREME COURT NOMINATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as we all know, President Trump will announce his nominee to fill the seat vacated by the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. The Senate is prepared

to examine the qualifications of that nominee and hold a vote here on a timely basis.

This, of course, is set in line with the precedent set by Presidents and Senates that were elected long before we became Members of this body or were even born, and we are prepared to follow suit. There were 29 times when there was a vacancy during the election year where the party occupying the White House and the majority of the Senate were the same, and 29 times there were confirmation processes, and it will be the same again this year with the 30th.

As always, we will be thorough. As a member of the Judiciary Committee, I have had the privilege of participating in a number of confirmation hearings for Supreme Court Justices. I know every member of the committee takes this job very seriously—our role of advice and consent under the Constitution. We will not rush the process. Every Member of this body will have an opportunity to vote for or against the nominee once the nominee is voted out of the Judiciary Committee.

But it seems that for our friends on the other side of the aisle, precedent is not enough. The prospect of another Trump-appointed Supreme Court Justice has mobilized our Democratic colleagues to launch an attack that has been months in the making on our very independent judiciary.

One of the hallmarks of our Constitution and our democracy is an independent judiciary—an umpire, if you will—that will mediate the fight between the executive and legislative branches and rule on the very constitutionality of the laws that are passed. Long before this vacancy even existed, though, our Democratic colleagues were sounding the alarm, suggesting they would expand or pack the Supreme Court with liberal Justices that will rubberstamp the political results they could not achieve through legislation.

During the Presidential primary this year, candidates were especially eager to share their vision for a larger and solidly liberal Supreme Court. A number of our Senate colleagues were among those open to the idea, including the current Democratic candidate for Vice President, the Senator from California.

Over the last several months, Democrats in both the House and the Senate, including House Judiciary Committee Chairman JERRY NADLER, have expressed an interest in upending the integrity of the Supreme Court and its role in leading the independent judicial branch. Once the Supreme Court vacancy went from a possibility to a reality, these comments have now turned into threats.

Over the weekend, the junior Senator from Massachusetts tweeted that “when Democrats control the Senate in the next Congress, we must abolish the filibuster and expand the Supreme Court.”

The Senator from New York, the minority leader himself, reportedly told his Members on a call this weekend, which was reported in social media: “Nothing is off the table.”

Now, mistreatment of conservative nominees to the courts is nothing new, including 2 years ago, when Democrats waged an all-out smear campaign against Justice Kavanaugh. But now, even before the nominee is announced, our Democratic colleagues are taking aim at the institution itself.

We know this isn't the first time that our colleagues have floated institutional changes to shift the political tide in their favor. When they lost the Senate majority, they decided they wanted to add new States. They are uninterested in bipartisanship. So they want to end the legislative filibuster. And now they threaten to pack the court with liberal Justices to give them a political outcome. They are taking the saying, “if you can't win the game, change the rules,” to a whole new level.

This isn't just political gamesmanship anymore. It is an assault on the Constitution itself, along with the integrity of our article III courts and our system of checks and balances. This court-packing threat isn't new. It preceded the death of Justice Ginsburg in the creation of the vacancy that we will soon consider, but they are now trying to rebrand the reasoning behind it.

Since the idea was previously viewed as too radical by members of their own party, with even Justice Ginsburg opposing it, they are trying to shift the blame to Republicans. By following the precedent of 29 judicial confirmation hearings occurring during an election year and undermining or challenging the Senate's constitutional duty to provide advice and consent, our Democratic colleagues claim that it is we who are responsible for an attack on democracy. They, in effect, are holding the Supreme Court hostage in saying: Don't make me kill the hostage.

Democrats aren't just trying to prevent a single conservative Justice from joining the Court. They are trying to dismantle the very institution itself. The Supreme Court has had nine Justices for more than 150 years. As the balance has shifted in many different directions over the years, Members of Congress have respectfully refrained from engaging in such dangerous threats.

This isn't just about a conservative Justice or a liberal Justice. It is about preserving one of our most basic institutions—a free and independent judiciary.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mr. President, now on another matter, by virtually any measure our economy was booming at the start of this year. Successful reforms under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act allowed workers to keep more of what they earned and gave job creators the freedom to create new economic opportunities for the American people.

Within the first 2 years of these changes, we experienced record gains in employment and increases in household income for families across the country, including Hispanic and African-American households. New census data paints a clear picture of just how strong the economy was in 2019. The median household income reached an all-time high of \$68,700. That is a 6.8-percent increase over the previous year. Not only that, if you look at the dollar amount alone, it is almost double the next highest dollar amount in annual growth.

As I said, Black and Hispanic Americans each experienced a higher than average growth rate and historically low unemployment rates. Median earnings increased 7.8 percent for women, compared to 2.5 percent for men, representing progress in the fight to close the pay gap.

The benefits of our booming market, though, didn't stop there. The new jobs and opportunities created during this boom drew more workers who had been on the sidelines into the labor market, and the result was spectacular. The poverty rate dropped to 10.5 percent, which is the lowest since 1959. Every population group made gains. Regardless of race, gender, age, disability status, or marital status, each group experienced a decline in the poverty rate.

Make no mistake about it. We still have a long way to go to ensure that no family in America lives in poverty, but we also ought to be willing to assess progress when progress is made. There is no doubt that our economic engine was humming and the American people were seeing and feeling the benefits of our strong economy every single day. And then, of course, the pandemic hit. Suddenly, after years of adding new jobs and creating economic opportunities for millions of Americans, it felt like the gains we made were erased in the blink of an eye.

Through no fault of their own, businesses were forced to close their doors to help slow the spread of the virus, and with no tables to wait on, customers to serve, or travelers to accommodate, millions of workers were left without a way to earn a living. Well-meaning employers, sadly, handed their workers pink slips and said they hoped to have jobs for them to come back to once the pandemic was in the rearview mirror.

Until that could happen, millions of Americans relied on enhanced unemployment benefits, which ended at the end of July, including an extra \$600 a week in Federal benefits. But there are still families across Texas struggling to make ends meet, and there are workers waiting to return to their jobs with no end in sight.

While we have made progress against the virus, we have to make progress, too, in recovering our economy. In the beginning, restaurants and retailers began adding curbside service and delivery to regain some income, and throughout most of Texas now, these

businesses are able to open to 75 percent of capacity. Gladly, we are seeing more and more workers returning to work and our children returning to school.

In Texas, unemployment has steadily declined from a peak of 13.5 percent to 6.8 percent in August. I think a lot of that progress is due to the success of the CARES Act and, especially, the Paycheck Protection Program, which sent more than \$41 billion in more than 417,000 different loans to small businesses in Texas alone.

I am still hoping that we can come to an agreement on another coronavirus relief bill that would extend the Paycheck Protection Program and provide some enhanced level of Federal employment benefits, but those measures alone will not support our economic recovery. We know that regaining lost ground will not happen overnight. It is going to take time for our country to return to the pre-pandemic economy that the President and Republican Senate fought so hard to achieve.

As we consider the most effective ways to tune up our economic engine, our guiding principle should be that of the doctor-patient oath—the Hippocratic oath: First, do no harm.

Raising trillions of dollars in new taxes, as a number of leading Democrats have suggested, would be counterproductive. It wouldn't grow the economy. It would kill the economy. In 2009, as the Nation was fighting to recover from the 2008 recession, President Obama was asked about the possibility of raising taxes, and he didn't mince words. He said: The last thing you want to do is raise taxes in the middle of a recession.

That is exactly right, but that is exactly the opposite of what the leading Democratic candidates, including the Democratic nominee for President, are advocating. They are advocating for a huge tax increase, even as we are hopefully closer to the end of the pandemic than we are the beginning. It is just the wrong medicine for what ails our economy, as President Obama noted.

Families, we know, are still struggling, workers are still hurting, and the American people need more money in their paychecks, not less. We need to look at what made the 2019 economy such a success and try to ensure that those changes prop us up for a strong comeback, and I think the best place to start is with the success of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

After it passed almost 3 years ago, I traveled across my State and met with business owners and employees who were reaping the immediate benefits. Those were in the form of new hires, bonuses, raises, and 401(k) match increases. Employees at every business of every size were seeing the benefits of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. While some of the provisions of that law are permanent, others are set to expire in 2025, and, without action, things like the lower income tax rate for individuals and the increased child tax credit will expire.

As we work to support our country through the recovery process, we need to emulate the reforms that made our booming economy a reality in the first place. As I said, I don't expect the road to recovery to be quick, but there are steps that we can take to make it easier.

First, we could do our job by supporting the individuals and businesses hit hardest by the pandemic. Time and again, our Democratic colleagues have objected to us even considering legislation to continue those important provisions of the CARES Act. We can take the government's boot off of job creator's necks, and we can fight to bring jobs back that were shipped overseas because we learned a lot about vulnerable supply chains and manufacturing that needs to be returned to the United States.

Following tax reform, millions of new jobs were created, and Americans brought home more of their hard-earned money. As a result, we reached 3.5 percent unemployment—the lowest unemployment rate in a half a century. That progress was possible because of the right policies that increased take-home pay for workers and unleashed the power of the private sector. So I have no doubt, as we rebuild our economy, that we will do so if we continue to embrace the policies that made 2019 a banner year.

Let me just conclude by saying that we must pass another COVID-19 relief bill. Time and again, Speaker PELOSI has refused to negotiate in good faith to come up with a compromise. In the meantime, airlines that employ tens of thousands of people in my State and across the country will begin laying off their employees beginning October 1. Businesses that were sustained by the PPP program have now run out of those funds, and they need to be replenished.

I get questions time and again about the lapsing of the enhanced unemployment benefit that was part of the CARES Act. We tried to extend that at some reasonable level, but our Democratic colleagues objected, blocked it, and stopped it.

What I fear, as Chairman Powell of the Federal Reserve and Secretary Mnuchin, the Treasury Secretary, have suggested, is that the massive stimulus that we provided, roughly \$3 trillion through four bills that were passed on a bipartisan basis—that has sustained our economy and brought us to where we are today, even in the darkest of times through this pandemic, but if we leave here with our Democratic colleagues having prevented us from providing another COVID-19 relief bill, I think it guarantees nothing but pain for the economy, American workers, and American families. We should not go down that path or tolerate it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to be allowed to finish my remarks.

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

WASHINGTON STATE WILDFIRES

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I rise to speak about three critical matters impacting families in Washington State and across this country today.

First of all, I would like to say that even though the wildfires in my State are being contained, thanks to the skilled work of brave and dedicated firefighters, wildfires and health impacts of smoke are still creating hazardous conditions throughout the Pacific Northwest. Until we begin addressing the drivers of those natural disasters, like climate change, we know these crises and the suffering they bring will only continue getting worse.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Secondly, I want to talk about three nominees under consideration for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or the EEOC.

One of these nominees is Jocelyn Samuels. She is exactly who workers need right now. As the coronavirus continues to impact workplaces across the country, workers are facing unprecedented challenges, and they need a champion at the EEOC who will work tirelessly to defend their rights. Jocelyn Samuels is that champion.

With almost 20 years of experience in the Federal Government, including at the EEOC itself, she has spent her career working to address discrimination and making sure no one is treated unfairly because of their age, their race, or their disability.

I am confident she will be an excellent Commissioner. I am proud to vote to confirm her nomination and strongly urge my Senate colleagues to join me in supporting her nomination.

Unfortunately, the other two nominees already approved by the Senate—Andrea Lucas and Keith Sonderling—will likely have disastrous consequences for workers' rights. These are two people who have spent their careers working to protect corporations, not workers.

As a lawyer, Andrea Lucas has never defended workers. Her only legal experience is defending corporations when workers tried to fight back against sexual harassment or age discrimination and disability discrimination. That is exactly the opposite type of experience and values we need at the EEOC, which is why I voted against her nomination.

Keith Sonderling's record is no better. During his time at the Trump administration's Department of Labor, Keith Sonderling worked to churn out policies that hurt workers.

From his joint employer rule that lets massive corporations off the hook for minimum wage, overtime, and equal pay violations to his initiative that gives companies a "get out of jail free" card for wage theft, Keith Sonderling's legacy at the DOL has made it harder for workers to fight for their rights and easier for companies to abuse them. For those reasons, I opposed his nomination.

Finally, right now, our Nation is facing truly trying times. Two hundred thousand lives have been lost to COVID, millions are unemployed, and we just lost a treasured American hero, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

So much hangs in the balance now, and people are already voting and organizing to make sure their healthcare, their rights, and their futures are protected in this election.

For those nationwide who have already cast their ballots and who will vote in the coming weeks for the future of our country and to help ensure trust—trust in our democracy—the people must have a vote in this nomination.

The next President should choose Justice Ginsburg's replacement as she wished to spare our democracy the painful chaos of making such a decision so close to an election.

People are speaking out, and the Senate must listen, as Majority Leader MCCONNELL insisted only a few years ago. But, unfortunately, it seems like my colleagues on the other side are content to ignore these cries, just like they have neglected the cries of our constituents for a COVID-19 relief package that meets this moment instead of shortchanging our communities because nothing—nothing is more important than pushing through their ideological agenda to jam as many partisan judges on the bench as possible, especially on the Supreme Court, and tip the balance of our Federal judiciary even further against everyday people, packing our courts to ensure we can't make progress to defend affordable healthcare and pre-existing conditions protections or addressing the climate crisis or strengthening protections for workers or doing anything on the critical issues that people in my home State of Washington and around the Nation care so deeply about and that have been blocked time and again by the Republican Party.

I will be doing absolutely everything I can to make sure everyone from Washington State to Washington, DC, and my Republican colleagues here in Congress know just how much is at risk if President Trump gets to appoint another hard-right nominee an unprecedented 41 days before a Presidential election.

It is truly impossible to understate the consequences for families and communities across the country now and for generations to come. President Trump has made it clear he wants a nominee who will gut protections for preexisting conditions, who will take healthcare away from millions of people nationwide, and do everything they can to undermine basic rights and freedoms and protections through the Court, including crucial worker protections that Justice Ginsburg, herself, helped secure and the EEOC is tasked with enforcing.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting today to honor an important

part of Justice Ginsburg's legacy and vote for the nomination of Jocelyn Samuels. Then let's keep fighting for people's healthcare, for protections for preexisting conditions, for workers' rights, and voters' rights, and LGBTQIA+ rights, and for the vision of a just and equal country—a just and equal country Justice Ginsburg fought so hard to advance.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON HINDERAKER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Hinderaker nomination?

Mr. ALEXANDER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 70, nays 27, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 191 Ex.]

YEAS—70

Alexander	Grassley	Risch
Baldwin	Hassan	Roberts
Bennet	Hirono	Romney
Blunt	Hyde-Smith	Rosen
Booker	Inhofe	Rubio
Brown	Jones	Sanders
Burr	Kaine	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shelby
Carper	Leahy	Sinema
Casey	Loeffler	Smith
Cassidy	Manchin	Stabenow
Collins	Markey	Tester
Coons	McConnell	Tillis
Cornyn	McSally	Toomey
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Udall
Crapo	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Ernst	Murray	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Perdue	Wicker
Fischer	Peters	Wyden
Gillibrand	Portman	
Graham	Reed	

NAYS—27

Barrasso	Enzi	Paul
Blackburn	Gardner	Rounds
Blumenthal	Hawley	Sasse
Boozman	Heinrich	Schumer
Braun	Hoeven	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cramer	Lankford	Sullivan
Cruz	Lee	Thune
Daines	Moran	Young

NOT VOTING—3

Capito	Harris	Johnson
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The nomination was confirmed.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Roderick C. Young, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia.

Mitch McConnell, Mike Braun, Mike Rounds, Marsha Blackburn, Todd Young, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Lindsey Graham, Marco Rubio, Tim Scott, Chuck Grassley, Kevin Cramer, Lamar Alexander, Pat Roberts, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, James E. Risch.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Roderick C. Young, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 93, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 192 Ex.]

YEAS—93

Alexander	Gardner	Portman
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Reed
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Bennet	Grassley	Roberts
Blackburn	Hassan	Romney
Blunt	Hawley	Rosen
Booker	Heinrich	Rounds
Boozman	Hoeven	Rubio
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Sanders
Brown	Inhofe	Sasse
Burr	Jones	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cassidy	Lankford	Sinema
Collins	Leahy	Smith
Coons	Lee	Stabenow
Cornyn	Loeffler	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Tester
Cotton	Markey	Thune
Cramer	McConnell	Tillis
Crapo	Menendez	Toomey
Cruz	Merkley	Udall
Daines	Moran	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Enzi	Murray	Whitehouse
Ernst	Paul	Wicker
Feinstein	Perdue	Wyden
Fischer	Peters	Young

NAYS—3

Blumenthal	Hirono	Schumer
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NOT VOTING—4

Capito	Johnson
Harris	McSally

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 93, the nays are 3.