

virus is still raging and the customers don't have jobs.

That is why we need a comprehensive bill that actually meets the magnitude of this crisis. This visceral, decades-long opposition from my colleagues to unemployment insurance—I don't know how they don't realize that when 600,000 Ohioans are getting \$600 a week, they are spending that money at local businesses. They are keeping the economy going from just a total crevasse. They are helping the economy. They are helping local businesses. They are giving those businesses revenue, but when the \$600 just stops, not only are those 600,000 Ohioans' lives just so, so difficult, but it makes the businesses of which they are patrons, the businesses that they patronize—it obviously hurts them at their bottom line.

I think the stories from these businesses really get to the fundamental question of what sort of country we want to live in. When we invest in small business, we invest in people and communities, not stock buybacks, not executive bonuses.

I know that Senator MCCONNELL and his colleagues here always are looking out for the stock market, always are looking out for Wall Street, always want to hear about stock buybacks and executive bonuses. I know that is their thing. But during a pandemic, I wish it were less their thing.

The stakeholders in these businesses are not nameless, faceless shareholders. They are the owners' neighbors. They are family members. They are the people we see or used to see at our kids' schools, in the grocery store, and at church.

A year from now, do we want to be left with only the biggest companies that follow the Wall Street business model that treats workers as expendable?

Ohioans know all too well what happens when you let Wall Street run things and you ignore Main Street. Our communities have watched for decades as factories closed and investment dried up and storefronts were boarded over in towns and cities that once were thriving.

When people in those towns wake up, they realize the only jobs you can get are at a big-box chain for rock-bottom wages with no healthcare, no paid sick leave, no power over your schedule. Is that what we want for our future?

We have the resources to fix this. We are the greatest, richest country in the world. Let's rise to meet the moment. Let's pass a comprehensive bill that gets help to our businesses, our workers, and their customers. And let's get the communities the support they need.

Mr. President, in order to proceed to the consideration of H.R. 986, the Protecting Americans with Preexisting Conditions Act, which the House passed with bipartisan support, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, where do you begin? That was quite the statement.

At some point in time, it just becomes galling to listen to the tactics—the scare tactics and false allegations, particularly from the other side that gave us the Affordable Care Act, an Orwellian-named bill if there ever were one.

One of the promises made to promote that bill was, in the end, determined to be the PolitiFact Lie of the Year—I think in the year 2013: If you like your healthcare plan, you can keep your plan. If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor.

Millions of Americans lost their healthcare plans. They lost their doctors. Premiums didn't decline by \$2,500 per family; they actually skyrocketed—sometimes two, three, four times the price because of the faulty design of healthcare, of the Affordable Care Act, ObamaCare.

Probably the greatest false allegation that is just offensive—and, by the way, to call every Member on this side spineless is offensive. We have different views. You know, you try to respect the different views if you actually want to accomplish something.

But one of the greatest false allegations—and they go back to the well time and time and time and time again about this—is the Republicans don't want to protect the coverage for people with preexisting conditions. Nothing could be further from the truth.

That was an argument made back in 2010, and the American people decided that we should do that. Republicans agreed with the American people that we wanted to protect everybody's coverage, covering people with preexisting conditions.

We just want to do it where it doesn't cost Americans an arm and a leg. The faulty architecture of ObamaCare caused premiums to double, triple, and quadruple because they actually made a very small slice of the American public—5 to 7 percent of the people who had to buy coverage on the individual market, who don't have the employer coverage plans that cover people with preexisting conditions—they made that small percentage of the American public bear the full cost and brunt of covering people with preexisting conditions. It was not smart. It was a faulty design.

The way you fix it is, yes, you require insurance carriers to cover people with preexisting conditions, not deny them coverage, but you spread that cost over everybody.

Just as I mentioned earlier to the Democratic leader when I objected to his bill, our friends on the other side of the aisle are far more interested in an issue rather than getting a result.

How do I know this? Well, particularly on this issue, covering people with preexisting conditions, four times in just the last few days and weeks, they have voted no, first on two COVID

relief packages—the ones I was referring to earlier—the target package that does provide financial relief to the unemployed, to small businesses, to schools, to parents with childcare and provides funding for agriculture and testing and vaccines—that also included language to protect coverage for people with preexisting conditions.

Twice in the last few days or weeks, they have also voted no on Senator TILLIS's bill that does exactly that—protect the insurance coverage of people with preexisting conditions.

Now, if they were really serious about protecting the coverage of people with preexisting conditions, they would have voted yes. But they voted no.

So I could go on and on. I have jotted down all kinds of points that I would like to refute, but it is really not worth the time and effort.

Again, let me emphasize that Republicans agreed with the American people. This debate is over. We have offered proposals to do just this. We want to protect the insurance coverage of every American with preexisting conditions. We just want to do it in a way that doesn't cost them an arm and a leg like ObamaCare did.

So I personally am just getting sick of the false allegations, and that is only one of them. I could drone on and on about the false allegations made by the other side against Republicans and conservatives, but I will focus on this: This is a false charge. It is canard. It is a scare tactic. I am begging the American people not to listen to it or believe it. Republicans want to protect the insurance coverage of people with preexisting conditions. If they were serious about it, they would have voted yes on what we have already proposed; and for that and many other reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, before offering another unanimous consent, I just point out there were 10 years of protections for people with preexisting conditions under ObamaCare and 10 years of speeches from Republicans about repeal and replace, with no real proposal to replace the Affordable Care Act. The President has promised it about every couple of weeks through 4 years, and he still hasn't put a real bill forward.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 1230

Mr. President, in order to proceed to the consideration of H.R. 1230, Protecting Older Workers Against Discrimination Act, which passed the House with bipartisan support, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 1759

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, in order to proceed to consideration of H.R.

1759, BRIDGE for Workers Act, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I guess I am not surprised about that, considering I hear my colleagues talk about how outrageous it is that we were spending \$600 a week to help unemployed workers, and this bipartisan bill that passed the House would help workers to get retrained and get jobs, and they are not willing to do that either, but we also know that this is a bill that—we have seen this act before.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 3659

Mr. President, in order to proceed to the consideration of H.R. 3659, Danny's Law, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 4029

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, in order to proceed to the consideration of H.R. 4029, Tribal Access to Homeless Assistance Act, I ask that the Senate proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 5084

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, in order to proceed to the consideration of H.R. 5084, Improving Corporate Governance Through Diversity Act, legislation to require corporations to disclose—just disclose the racial, ethnic, and gender composition of their boards, which again passed the House with bipartisan support, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I will hold the floor for just another few moments.

I have watched Senator MCCONNELL—and I am sorry to call some of my colleagues spineless, Senator JOHNSON, but, you know, when the President made comments about our soldiers who had died in battle, I didn't hear hardly any Republicans speak up. I admire the courage of the Presiding Officer. I admire Senator MURKOWSKI and her courage over a number of things. But I see my colleagues—I hear what you all think. I know what Senator SASSE said during that townhall. I know many of

you, if not most of you, maybe all of you—probably not—think that about the President's lack of integrity and lack of character and dishonesty and the lies he tells. And I know, I have watched, and I sat right here and I looked across the aisle during impeachment and I saw the look of fear in my colleagues' eyes because they didn't want to cross the President; they didn't want to get the President to tweet about them or even get a primary opponent to them. That is why I use that term, but more importantly to the citizens of this country, we spent most of the last month after month after month after month, confirming very conservative, very young judges. I understand why you want to do that, but we are not doing anything for the public.

We had a high moment in March when Senator JOHNSON said we unanimously approved the CARES Act. A study shows the CARES Act kept 12 million Americans out of poverty. But then we ask to continue the CARES Act and do something similar like the Heroes Act, and instead Senator MCCONNELL—and I know the lobbyists that line up in front of his door, I know they have a lot of influence on him, but we saw Senator MCCONNELL say: no urgency, no urgency.

My favorite Abraham Lincoln quote is Lincoln wanted to—his staff wanted him to stay in the White House and win the war and abolish slavery and protect the Union, and they wanted him to stay in the White House. And he said: No, I have to go out and get my public opinion baths. Are none of my colleagues hearing the pain of laid-off workers who have lost their unemployment?

Haven't they seen schoolchildren—their parents saying: "I want to send my kids back to school, but they are not safe" because we aren't voting dollars to help?

I talked to my daughter last night. Just a few days ago, they announced that instead of school opening in person in Columbus next week, it is going to open in January, if even then, because we are not helping schools open.

We are not helping people avoid eviction. We are not helping local governments keep police and firemen on the streets and people who work in the parks and people who provide help for abused children and all the things that local governments do—we are doing none of that, but we have plenty of time to do judges. That is the frustration and why I made the comments I made.

It just breaks my heart that we all sit here. This is a group of pretty affluent and pretty privileged people. Yet we can't look out for people who are hurting like this country hasn't hurt for decades.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, this deserves a response.

The pandemic is an act of God. Maybe—maybe—and we don't know. We don't know what complicity China had in—the chance that it was developed in a lab in this. We just don't know. But we certainly know that China controlled the spread in China while they allowed their citizens to go all over the world and spread the pandemic. It is an act of God. It is certainly nobody's fault in the United States.

As chairman of Homeland Security, we have had before our committee the men and women in charge of these agencies who are trying to respond to an incredibly difficult situation.

I never criticized President Obama or Vice President Biden during H1N1. It was a contagious disease, and 60 million Americans were infected by it. I am not sure there is anything you really can do to prevent infections.

Now, I think we have actually been pretty successful in flattening the curve, people taking responsibility, becoming germophobes. We shut down our economy. Now, I never thought we should shut it down to the extent that we have because I have always tried to keep things in perspective, the human toll of the economic devastation of those shutdowns. But again, I find it galling when I know people like Pete Gaynor, General Giroir—the men and women—Dr. Birx, Dr. Hahn, the men and women in this administration who have been working 24/7 to respond as effectively as they can to an act of God, a pandemic.

Now, I have been on the conference calls. This administration has been as transparent as any I have seen. To accuse this administration of hiding the truth—I don't know where you were during the early months of this, but I was watching the hour- and 2-hour-long press conferences where the truth was being laid out in all its gory detail. Any American who watched that that wasn't concerned about COVID, I don't know what they were looking at. There was no hiding the ball here. President Trump and his administration made it very obvious what was at stake.

I am also aware of the fact that because of this act of God, because of this pandemic, there was an enormous demand for products that should have been in the national stockpile but wasn't there because the previous administration had run the stockpile down, and then we, all of us collectively, took our eye off the ball and didn't restore it. So the product just wasn't there. But I do know, in a very difficult situation, when demand outstrips supply by two or three times, the men and women in this administration, again, working tirelessly, allocated that PPE.

I am not aware that anybody ran out. Now, I know that everybody didn't get everything they wanted because some tough decisions had to be made. We had to surge PPE product to those hotspots, and where the pandemic wasn't raging, people didn't get everything they needed.