

Now, I am not an expert in vaccines, so my first thought would be, well, I want a vaccine that is 100 percent effective. As it turns out, no vaccine is 100 percent effective. The measles vaccine that schoolkids took for years and that most still take is 90 percent effective. It was 9 months ago that healthcare experts said, if we could have a vaccine that was 50 percent effective, we should approve that vaccine and every other one that was at least 50 percent effective.

We are looking at vaccines that are going to help us move beyond this as we look at tests that help us move beyond this, but the fundamental foundation of all of that is in the healthcare framework that we maintain. You can't look at a pandemic and say that now it is time to think about how we do important health research. You can't look at a pandemic and say that now it is time to think about having care providers in underserved areas. You can't look at a pandemic and say that now it is time to begin to think about how you connect childcare and work and school altogether. This bill does as much of that as we could figure out how to do in the best way we could figure out how to do it.

I hope Congress can pass it. It would be a great gift to the next Congress and administration after January 20 to be able to start next year with next year's work rather than having to start next year with this year's work. Let's get this year's work done. Let's get it done now. Let's send the bill to the President that the House and Senate have agreed on, and let's get back to looking at these bills in the right way at the right time.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

VETERANS DAY

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, when most Americans think of the sacrifices that our veterans made in the name of defending freedom, they think of those brave men and women running toward the danger. We are grateful that, in their hearts, they have that desire, but as anyone who knows or has worked with veterans knows, they also make sacrifices that really never bubble to the surface or come to our attention. Not only do they sacrifice their own safety, they give up their personal independence, the comforts of home, their relationships with friends and family, their spouses, and their children.

Think about what an extraordinary decision they have made—that the safety and security of their fellow countrymen is worth more than losing those precious days. They have made that choice. They put that service and that sacrifice in front of their desires, in front of the desires of their family. They are, indeed, called to serve.

These are the people whom we should be looking to for comfort and inspiration during difficult times. They really do have experience in that category.

They have made those sacrifices, and they have made those choices knowing that it wouldn't be easy and knowing that they may not come home, but, when they do come home, that sometimes it is tough. It is tough to get back in that groove of where you were, to rekindle those relationships.

Our younger veterans, in particular, were painfully aware of this when they put on the uniform. But do you know what? They still made that choice to serve.

Here in the Senate, we have backed legislation that really has made things easier for so many of our veterans.

When I was in the House, I was honored to help shepherd passage of the VA MISSION Act, and I was grateful to see that receive bipartisan support here in the Senate. It has, indeed, streamlined many of the processes in the VA healthcare system.

Last month, I introduced a bill to provide doula services to improve maternal health outcomes for our female veterans, a population that every single month continues to increase.

Back in August, I introduced a bill that will allow our K2 veterans to obtain the special health screenings they need to check for cancer and other illnesses caused by exposure to toxic substances in Uzbekistan.

In fact, this has been a great year for veteran support. We have passed—or are very close to passing—legislation that will improve and simplify doctor-patient relationships, recordkeeping, and mental health services, and will make those and other important benefits more accessible to our veterans and their families.

If you are not already supporting these efforts, I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

As the week draws to a close, I would encourage everyone to seek out veterans' stories and to internalize the knowledge that the sacrifices they made were for us. There is so much we can learn from those who have served. There is so much that they have done to help preserve our way of life and our freedoms. It is so much that they have done for the values and the institutions—things that really do transcend politics.

I reached out to many of our veterans this week and had great conversations and heard from veterans online.

I heard from William, a Tennessean who proudly served in the Air Force. He said his service was “the best decision of his entire life.”

I also heard from Greg, who served as a C-130 crew chief in theatre during Desert Storm. He put off his college education when he was asked to serve.

And I would be remiss if I did not recognize the veterans who are currently serving in our office: Dana Magnuson, John Clement, Jay Strobino, Dr. Karen Summar, and Paris Cervantes.

I thank each and every one of them for their service and for the continued work that they do on behalf of all Tennesseans.

These brave men and women represent the hope of a nation and our promise to the rest of the world that, no matter what, the United States stands ready and willing to answer the call.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant 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 have come to the floor again today to talk about the need for us, as a Congress, to come together to address this coronavirus pandemic. We have an unprecedented healthcare and economic crisis right now, and it is important for us to figure out what we can do, what we can agree on, and then move forward.

Since this pandemic began back in March, I am told I have come to the floor now 17 separate times to urge my colleagues to work together on a bipartisan basis to try to put together legislation that will enable us to respond effectively and in a focused way to the COVID-19 crisis.

We had some early successes. Remember the CARES Act that was passed back in March. That was 8 months ago—8 months ago. Really, for the last 6 months, we haven't passed anything to address this crisis. Yet the crisis has ebbed and flowed, and, right now, unfortunately, it is at an all-time high in my State of Ohio.

I have been frustrated that we can't have that same sense of urgency and willingness to work together as we had during those first couple of months of the coronavirus pandemic. It seemed to have disappeared as we entered election season; didn't it? So, as we got closer and closer to the election, there was more and more divide and inability to come together. Now we need to get back to that sense of bipartisanship—I would even say nonpartisanship in so much of this—and cooperation for the good of our country.

It is getting worse, as I said, in my State of Ohio and around the country, and I believe we can make a difference, and that is important. There are things we can do at the Federal level that would help.

Right now, we are averaging in this country over 100,000 new cases per day. That is double the rate from just 1 month ago—double the rate from 1 month ago. It was predicted as it got colder and people were inside more. The third wave has arrived.

In Ohio, the number of daily new cases has risen every day for the past month. Just last night, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine reported nearly 6,000 new cases in the last 24-hour period, compared to 1,000 cases per day that the

State experienced just at the beginning of October.

Unfortunately, it is not just about new cases. We are seeing increases in hospitalizations. We are seeing increases in patients that are in the ICU units. We are seeing increases, sadly, in fatalities. We need to do more to help this economy, too, because the economy, as the pandemic has worsened, has begun to slow.

Initially, we had impressive economic growth—no question about it—but it has begun to slow at a time when the economy is still down 10 million jobs since February. Think about that. We are still 10 million jobs short from where we were in February. What we really don't want is for those 10 million people to become long-term unemployed, who may never reenter the workforce. That is why it is important to act and act now.

Unemployment claims, which were going down, by the way, seem to have more or less flattened in most States, including Ohio. Ohio's unemployment rate, we are told, for the most recent month we have data for, which is September, was still above 8 percent. I think it is better now, but it is still way too high.

And, of course, certain sectors of the economy, like hospitality, travel, and entertainment, are really struggling badly, with no end in sight, as some States begin to reimplement these stricter social distancing measures, and some States are even putting back in place closures. So, if you are in the hospitality business, entertainment business, or travel business, you are concerned right now. To counter the spread of the virus, these closures are also going to have a terrible economic impact on businesses and on families.

These dangerous trends are putting people's lives and livelihoods at risk if we can't start to reverse them. And, again, it has been 6 months since we came together in any kind of a package and 8 months since the CARES package.

I believe there are some in Congress, including, I believe, the Speaker of the House, who were not interested in seeing a comprehensive package passed before the election. They thought it would be good politics, I guess, for President Trump. I don't know. Looking at the results of the election, I think it might have been just the opposite.

But the point is that the election is now behind us. So if that was the reason, let's forget that. Let's get something done here. Let's get this partisan gridlock off the docket on this issue, and let's focus on what is good for the American people. This is what is called the lameduck session of Congress. So that is a good time to do it. We are past the election, and the new Congress hasn't come on yet. Let's work together in good faith toward a Federal response that is focused and targeted, and we can find some common ground here.

I believe the best path forward is very close to what has been embodied in some of these more targeted proposals, including ones that we have put on the floor repeatedly here since way back in August. These bills are inclusive of some of the most important bipartisan priorities, like providing needed funding for vaccine and therapy development and like replenishing the successful PPP program for small businesses. It was included in the CARES Act, by the way, but it expired back in August. So, on August 9, the Paycheck Protection Program, or PPP, actually expired. So for these struggling small businesses, they have nowhere to turn.

How about providing funding to the schools? That is bipartisan. How about making sure that we have folks who are able to come together to help ensure that we have adequate funding for this exciting new vaccine development that we are hearing about? Anyway, when we have tried to bring these to the floor, the other side has blocked even entering into a debate about it.

Instead, Democrats have insisted on the House-passed Heroes Act, which passed in May, with almost no Republican support, which makes a bunch of controversial changes to policy unrelated to coronavirus—repealing State and local tax deductions to benefit mostly wealthy Americans and making unprecedented changes to immigration laws. What do these policies have to do with coronavirus? Nothing.

At a time of unprecedented deficits and debt, it makes those changes with a pricetag of \$3.5 trillion. And some say: Well, the Speaker is now down to \$2.4 trillion. Folks, whatever that number is, it is going to be unprecedented. We never had anything that expensive pass the Congress. It is at a time, again, when we have the highest deficit we have ever had. And our debt, as a percent of our GDP, sadly, is now 100 percent of our GDP, which it hasn't been since World War II.

We are past the contentious election season now. So let's put aside the politics and let's build a targeted, bipartisan coronavirus bill based on what we all agree works and what we agree really is needed in the face of a rapidly spreading virus.

Here are a few examples of what we can do. First, our next coronavirus response package should have the Healthy Workplace Tax Credit, which basically says: We all want people to get back to work, back to school, and back to the hospitals. But let's do it safely. This would really help the bars, the restaurants, the salons, the gyms, the bowling alleys, and other businesses to reopen safely and stay open by basically compensating them for the purchase of hand sanitizers, PPE like face shields and gloves, and for the reconfiguration of their workplaces with plexiglass, as we are seeing, and for other measures to allow for social distancing.

As businesses prepare to winterize their outdoor spaces in order to pre-

vent the spread of COVID, this payroll tax credit that is in this legislation would help offset those costs and help businesses stay open. It is just what we need to help keep our economy afloat.

This is, I think, the sweet spot. I think everyone agrees, I hope, that we should go back to work, go back to school, go back to the hospitals, and so on, but we need to do it safely. That is what this does. Shouldn't that be bipartisan? Even nonpartisan?

Second, we should invest heavily in testing and contact tracing so that States are better equipped to respond to the surge of outbreaks. Republicans and Democrats alike know that fast and accurate tests are critical to stopping the spread of this disease and getting people more comfortable going back to shopping, going back to work, going back to school, and going back to a more normal life.

The targeted bill, again, that we introduced last month that Democrats blocked had \$16 billion set aside for testing and tracing. We could use those resources right now in Ohio. I spoke to Governor DeWine earlier this week. We want the money for testing. We need it. Let's pass it now.

Third, we also need help to continue the development of these treatments and these vaccines as quickly as possible. The recent news of a potential vaccine by Pfizer with a 90-percent efficacy is really promising, but we can't take our foot off the gas on this. If we cannot address the underlying healthcare challenge with the coronavirus, we are going to be stuck playing defense against this disease for a long time.

The targeted bill from last month included \$37 billion for vaccine development and distribution and \$20 billion for therapies, which I think are really good starting points for us to at least debate what the final number should be. But let's help right now to ensure we don't slow down the vaccines and the therapies and be sure the distribution works.

In the face of a virus that seems like it is getting more and more out of hand every day, these three proposals are examples—the tax credit for safely reopening businesses, money for improved testing and tracing, and money for vaccine and therapy development. These all seem like commonsense ideas. I don't see any reason why a majority in this Chamber can't come together and build a bipartisan response based on these kind of simple policies.

Whatever we do, we can't afford to delay any longer. American lives are at stake, and we are in danger of losing ground where we gained it on the coronavirus, as this third wave threatens my home State of Ohio and our country. Let's not wait any longer. Let's come together and once again get something done that helps the people whom we represent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

ROSIE THE RIVETER CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT OF 2019

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I rise today to urge this body to pass H.R. 1773, the Rosie the Riveter Congressional Gold Medal Act. This bill would honor the American women who joined the workforce in support of the war effort during World War II.

Millions of women dedicated themselves to strengthening our Nation and answered the call to action by joining the workforce and learning new jobs. Many of these women built the vehicles, the weaponry, and the ammunition that were critical to the war effort. Whether they worked on assembly lines, addressed the troops' medical needs, or tended to ships and farms, Rosies ensured the country continued functioning during the war while often serving as the primary caretakers for their children.

These Rosie the Riveters rose to the challenge and set a powerful example both to working women and for all Americans. Rosies not only faced gender-based discrimination, but Rosies of color fought racial discrimination, all while manufacturing planes, ships, tanks, weapons, jeeps, and everything else that was needed to defeat the enemy in World War II.

Today, their example continues to inspire generations to embody the "We can do it" spirit. The Rosies are among our Nation's greatest living heroines. They deserve recognition and formal commendation for their service to our country while they are still with us.

The Rosies who are still alive are in their nineties, and we need to honor them now. The House version of the Rosie the Riveter Gold Medal Act passed a year ago on November 13, 2019, by unanimous consent and with broad bipartisan cosponsorship. The Senate version, S. 892, which I introduced last year, has 76 cosponsors, including 36 Republicans, as well as all 26 women serving in the Senate of both parties.

This body has already made clear its overwhelming support for the bill. Each State contributed to the war effort, and each State has Rosies awaiting this award.

I would like to tell you about a Rosie the Riveter from my home State of Pennsylvania. I will just put up a poster of a picture of her. As I said, she is a Pennsylvanian. Her name is Mae Krier of Levittown, PA, Bucks County, Southeastern Pennsylvania. Mae worked in a Boeing factory where she helped make B-17 and B-29 warplanes as a teenager during World War II. Mae is now 94 years old and has been working to recognize and honor her fellow Rosies—not for years; she has been working on this for decades.

Mae is a patriot. And Mae is now serving her country yet again during another crisis. She has spent the better part of this year making face masks for those who need them. These polka-dot masks are reminiscent of the bandanna worn by the woman in the famous "We Can Do It" poster.

Mae is the embodiment of the "We Can Do It" spirit. For over 70 years, from the Boeing assembly line where she worked to her sewing machine today, Mae has devoted herself to the betterment of the Nation.

She and her fellow Rosies have earned this Congressional Gold Medal. Many of Mae's friends—her fellow Rosies—have passed away without the recognition that they are worthy of. Thousands more are eagerly awaiting the passage of this bill, in addition to the families of the Rosies who have died.

This honor has already been delayed for far too long. I urge my colleagues to pass this important, time-sensitive legislation.

So, Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be discharged, and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 1773.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1773) to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the women in the United States who joined the workforce during World War II, providing the aircraft, vehicles, weaponry, ammunition and other material to win the war, that were referred to as "Rosie the Riveter", in recognition of their contributions to the United States and the inspiration they have provided to ensuing generations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding?

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CASEY. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 1773) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. CASEY. Thank you.

NOMINATION OF AILEEN MERCEDES CANNON

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I rise today to support the confirmation of Aileen Mercedes Cannon to serve as a U.S. District Court Judge for the Southern District of Florida. Ms. Cannon has a distinguished record of public service, during which she has demonstrated a firm commitment to upholding the United States Constitution and respecting the rule of law. She began her legal career as a law clerk for Judge Steven Colloton on the Eighth Circuit United States Court of Appeals and has served with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida since 2013. I am confident that she will continue to serve the Southern District of Florida well once she is confirmed to the bench, and

I am proud to support her confirmation today.

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

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote begin now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Cannon nomination?

Mr. TOOMEY. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Georgia (Mrs. LOEFFLER), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RICH), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) would have voted "yea" and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 56, nays 21, as follows: