

said, of course he lost every one of those amendments.

Twenty-seven amendments in 1 year; 22 the previous year. Do you know why? We don't legislate. We don't debate. We don't offer amendments. We don't pass bills. We come here with a new set of nominations every week from the Republican majority. We don't have any legislation on the pandemic. We have no legislation on economic recovery. We just have to get these lifetime appointees, some who have been found categorically unqualified. That is what this Senate is all about.

In this last week before the Thanksgiving recess, is this really all we are going to do? How about the 28 rural hospitals in Kentucky that are facing the risk of closure? How about the \$1.3 billion of uncompensated losses for these hospitals across Kentucky? The Republican proposal a few weeks ago didn't provide any economic relief for hospitals, clinics, or healthcare providers like those.

Americans need leadership. They need for the Senate to step up and say: For goodness' sake, whatever the political agenda is here, how can it be more important than this pandemic?

Isn't there enough talent or will on the floor of the Senate—on the Republican side and on the Democratic side—to find a way to help Americans who are struggling, to provide unemployment assistance, to provide help to small businesses, these restaurants and small businesses that are facing closure, to give some money to local units of government that through no fault of their own lost revenue to this COVID-19 crisis? These are not wild ideas; these address the very basics that face families, businesses, and governments across this country. For some reason, that particular issue can't make the agenda.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Mr. President, losing an election hurts. I know. I lost three elections before I ever won one. I suspect that anyone who has ever lost an election has had to grapple with the disappointments, the what-ifs, and even a kind of sadness, bordering on anger, but that is the risk you take when you run for office. The voters have the last word.

Never, until now, have we ever heard it suggested that a losing Presidential candidate ought to be allowed to put America's national security at risk because he is struggling mightily to accept his own loss in the election. Never, until now, have we tolerated a losing Presidential candidate's deliberately undermining Americans' faith in the integrity of our electoral system.

Never before have we witnessed a losing Presidential candidate refuse, out of spite and anger, to follow the law and allow the peaceful, orderly transfer of power to his successor. Never before now could many Americans even imagine an outgoing President deliberately sabotaging our Nation's heroic efforts

to bring an end to the deadliest health crisis in our country, but that is what is happening. It is shocking. It is dangerous. It is shameful. It needs to stop now.

Some of my Republican colleagues ask: What harm can it do? We want to humor the President. He is going through a period of adjustment here. He lost an election. It hurts. The poor President—we have to stick with him. We have to parrot his theories of how there will be massive numbers of votes discovered somewhere. We know that he is raging in his tweets regularly. So he still must be in pain, the poor man, and we have to humor him. We have to tell him: Yes, Mr. President. You must be right. This election must have been stolen from you.

Let me tell you what harm it can do. Every minute of every hour, an American dies from COVID-19. Every day, 1,000 Americans are dying from COVID. That is nearly a 50-percent increase from a month ago. We are nearing 1 million new COVID infections every week. The pandemic is surging in every single State, and public health experts warn the worst is yet to come.

Over the weekend, we learned that President Trump has not attended a single meeting of the White House's coronavirus task force in 5 months. He told us why. I am tired of this COVID-19, he says. He has gone AWOL. By refusing to concede the results of the election, President Trump is preventing our Federal health officials from meeting with President-Elect Biden's COVID task force and starting to coordinate the efforts for the transition that is going to take place on January 20, and failing to put the time, personnel, and resources into the distribution of a vaccine, which we pray to God will be available soon. In doing this, the President is jeopardizing America's ability to successfully distribute a COVID vaccine and bring this pandemic, once and for all, under control.

He is deepening our Nation's economic crisis because the first step to healing our economy is in defeating this virus—all because of the pain he is going through personally. Well, I wish I could share that pain, but I am overwhelmed by the pain of America's going through a pandemic. The President's hurt feelings don't compare. The grief of losing an election is nothing compared to the grief of 246,000 American families who have lost loved ones to this pandemic. That is the grief we ought to be concerned about.

More Americans voted in these elections than ever before—in history. Now that the election is over, the results are clear: President-Elect Biden and Vice President-Elect Harris received 306 electoral votes versus 232 electoral votes for President Trump and Vice President PENCE. Four years ago, the President referred to exactly the same vote totals in his favor as a landslide. Today, he refuses to acknowledge them. He is so full of himself that he

can't feel the pain of others. Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS received at least 5 million more votes than President Trump and Vice President PENCE. That is the largest popular vote margin of victory in a Presidential election since 1932.

In the 2 weeks since the election has ended, the Trump campaign and its allies have decided to strike back and file a flurry of lawsuits in six different States, challenging the vote counts. Well, how are they doing? These lawsuits have only affirmed the integrity of the election results that we knew. Many of the complaints have been dismissed, and not a single vote has been invalidated. Even Trump campaign officials privately and publicly agree that none of the remaining legal challenges can change the outcome of the election.

Last Thursday, members of the Election Infrastructure Government Coordinating Council, within this administration's own Department of Homeland Security, called the 2020 election "the most secure in American history."

Over the weekend, a senior Federal election official who was nominated by President Trump condemned the President's false postelection claims of vote fraud, calling them baffling, laughable, and insulting. The same official warned "these conspiracy theories that are flying around have consequences."

They are dangerous to our national security. Over the weekend, John Bolton, who is President Trump's former National Security Advisor, urged Republican leaders to finally acknowledge Mr. Trump's defeat and get on with it.

Another former Trump security adviser, LTG H.R. McMaster, rejected Mr. Trump's claim on Twitter that the Presidential election was rigged. "What the President says in this tweet—it's just wrong," the general said. "It's regrettable, it's counterproductive."

John Kelly, once Chief of Staff to the same President, told POLITICO that a delayed transition was detrimental to the country's national security. His concerns were echoed by more than 150 former national security, senior military, and elected officials who called on the leader of the General Services Administration, Ms. Emily Murphy, to recognize the election of President-Elect Biden and Vice President-Elect HARRIS.

Yet Administrator Murphy refuses to gauge what is known as "ascertainment" to establish who the real winners were. She continues to deny President-Elect Biden and his team access to resources and the knowledge they need to begin the massive task of setting up a new government. Administrator Murphy's actions are in defiance of the Federal Presidential Transition Act, the law that has governed the transfer of Presidential power in America since 1963.

Quite stunningly, what we are hearing from our American President—the

leader of the free world—are the same kind of nonsense claims that petty dictators use to deny citizens democracy and the peaceful transfers of power. One need only look at Belarus, at the moment, for a timely comparison. America is the country that stands against these kinds of undemocratic attempts at power around the world, not a nation that cowers in fear.

Leader McCONNELL has compared President Trump's refusal to accept the election results to the delay in determining the winner of the 2000 election, which sounds right until you look at the facts. He is wrong. The comparison is wrong. The 2000 election between President Bush and former Vice President Gore ultimately came down to a difference of not 5 million votes but 537 votes in one State—Florida—not tens of thousands of votes in many States. Even Republican attorney and elections expert Ben Ginsberg rejects the comparison. He ought to know. Ginsberg was part of the team that led President Bush's recount effort in 2000.

The refusal by President Trump and some around him to accept the election results is damaging faith in our elections and our democracy. The goal is clear: to undermine the legitimacy of the Biden-Harris administration even before it is sworn in. He is damaging the ability of President-Elect Biden and his team to get to work now on the deep and painful challenges we confront as a nation.

People close to President Trump tell reporters off the record that the President knows he can't win. Some say he just needs to very gradually come to accept the reality of his defeat.

Well, with all due respect, Mr. President, your duty is to preserve this democracy. Your moral obligation is to prevent unnecessary suffering and death and to defend this country.

For 4 years, Donald Trump has feasted on chaos and the discord of America. Time and time again, he has placed his own self-interest over our national interest. He has damaged the institutions of our democracy and abused his power. We shouldn't be surprised by his destructive actions on his way out, but we shouldn't tolerate them either.

It is time for Donald Trump to accept the clear results of the election and for his administration to work with President-Elect Biden's team for a successful, peaceful, productive transition of power. It is time for the President's friends, allies, and political pals to finally level with the President. It is time for a confrontation, perhaps—a moment of truth, perhaps—and to say to the President: It is over. Now be a man. Stand up, and show this Nation that we can have a peaceful transition of power. Show this Nation we are prepared to accept the will of the American people.

Subverting faith in democracy is not a winning strategy, and it should be beneath the dignity of any American President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I was listening to our friend, the Democratic whip, and his advice to President Trump to capitulate before the recounts and before the litigation that has been filed has been finally decided. I know they would like to have him do so, but he is completely within his rights to use the existing procedures in the States and in the local jurisdictions where these elections were conducted to review the results to see if there are discrepancies.

I also know they would like to say it is just about President Trump, but more candidates other than President Trump were on the ballot. We ought to be in the position of trying to preserve every legal vote for every candidate and making sure there are no mistakes, and there is a process in place to make that happen.

I don't know what the ultimate outcome will be—I sort of have a sneaking suspicion about what the trend line looks like—but 72 million-plus people voted for President Trump and Vice President PENCE. Out of respect for them, at least, if not for the President and the Vice President themselves, we ought to let this process play itself out. There will be a peaceful transition of power. I have no doubt whatsoever.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. President, I would like to also take a second to respond to the Senator's comments about our needing to do something about this pandemic—that we need to pass another piece of legislation and that we need to collaborate with the incoming administration to make sure that we don't miss distributing this vaccine on a timely basis.

My friend from Illinois, at least on three occasions, has voted against bills that would help to facilitate the delivery of the vaccine and would ensure that small businesses and other individuals get the economic help they need during this crisis that has been through no fault of their own.

By my count, our Democratic colleagues voted against a \$1 trillion HEALS bill. They voted against two separate, more targeted pieces of legislation that totaled a half a trillion dollars each. Those are three occasions on which they voted against continuing to provide the aid that we had voted on, on a bipartisan basis, by the end of March—four bills worth \$3.8 trillion.

I could only have wished that the sort of bipartisan cooperation we saw up through and including the CARES Act in late March would have continued, but that wasn't to be. Time and again, Speaker PELOSI stood on a \$3 trillion piece of legislation that she knew had no chance of passing. Why? Because it included things like tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires in blue States. She wanted to eliminate the cap on State and local tax deductions in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which we passed a few years ago, and reward mil-

lionaires and billionaires, which was not exactly dealing with the virus, either its economic fallout or the public health consequences.

Then, if that weren't enough—stiff-arming every effort that we tried to undertake since March to try to pass additional relief, both from a public health and economic perspective—today, the Speaker and the Democratic leader of the Senate took the bold step—the bold step—of writing a letter to Majority Leader McCONNELL. Man, that was a bold step to protect the public health and protect those who, through no fault of their own, find themselves out of a job or in financial distress.

Well, I have been around here long enough to know the only reason you write a letter to somebody and then release it to the press before it gets to its intended recipient is for political purposes. It is posturing. That is what we continue to see from our friends across the aisle—political posturing.

Now they are saying—I think the Vice President himself said this—unless you drop the lawsuits, you drop the efforts to review the vote and to make sure all the ballots—all the legal ballots—are correctly counted and the ballots that are not appropriate are not counted, then people will die, unless you capitulate and give up all those rights.

In the wake of these partisan efforts to defeat any meaningful, additional relief post-March, it should be held up to ridicule because that is exactly what it deserves. It is not serious. It is partisan posturing.

If the Speaker and the Democratic leader wanted to get to work on another COVID-19 bill, do you know what they could do? They could pick up the telephone. You know, they could do a Zoom call. They wouldn't even have to socially distance or wear masks. They wouldn't have to worry about that. They could do it virtually. Or, if they wanted to do it in person, then they could come over, socially distance, and do it safely.

But this is all partisan posturing. This is not about the public health of the American people. This is not about helping people who are desperately in need of additional financial assistance—the small businesses and others that continue to struggle and lay off their workforce.

If we are serious about solving this problem, then we need to work together as we did during four separate pieces of legislation, ending with the CARES Act in late March.

But ever since that time, ever since we have offered additional assistance, Speaker PELOSI has shut it down. Our Democratic colleagues have all voted against it.

If they were serious about it, they would have voted to get on the bill, offer amendments, try to make it better, and let the Senate do its job. But, no, they wanted to make things worse in the runup to the election because